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GAMES MASTER
THE MASTER OF GAMES SINCE 1993

BEST BITS!

The stand out stuff this month on the UK's number one games mag!

p82

RESIDENT EVIL 4

With so much evil to ward off and all the guns and ammo you can fit in the biggest *Resi* inventory ever, you get to see lots of beautifully done reloading animations. Our faves: the barrel spinning and bullet insertion on the magnum and the effort of squeezing shells into the rifle. Nothing increases the tension of a lengthy reload than a horde of possessed villagers with burning torches stumbling toward you. Or the resulting relief of squeezing the trigger with a fresh load of ammo.

p64

TIMESPLITTERS

There's a definite satisfaction to winning a deathmatch with your least effective weapon. Who can forget games of deadly slapseys in *GoldenEye* on the N64? And in the new *TimeSplitters* (developed by some of the same people as the Rare classic) that means lobbing a brick towards someone's swede. Connect with a satisfying clunk and you can start your well- deserved victory gloat.

WELCOME TO GAMESMASTER

I'm thinking of installing one of those 'shoplifter' mirrors in the *GM* office. Not just to see where all our PS2 memory cards go, but so I don't have to keep leaving my post to see what's happening in *Resident Evil 4*. I can't see our main games playing TV from my desk, you see. So every five minutes when Dave calls out "I'm being chased by a giant midget!" (yes, that's a giant midget) or "I'm having a knife fight with a super-human man!" or even "Someone with a chainsaw's just dropped in my mine cart!", curiosity always gets the better of you. I then have to interrupt important Editor business (shouting at people on the phone, answering e-mail etc) to go and have a look. It's not just *Resi* fighting for eye attention either. *Splinter Cell*, *TimeSplitters*, *Astro Boy* on the GBA, *LEGO Star Wars*, I could go on. Lesser games mags would want a breather. But being the UK's biggest selling multi-format magazine, it's a normal month. Why put up with one console's load of games when you can see everything?

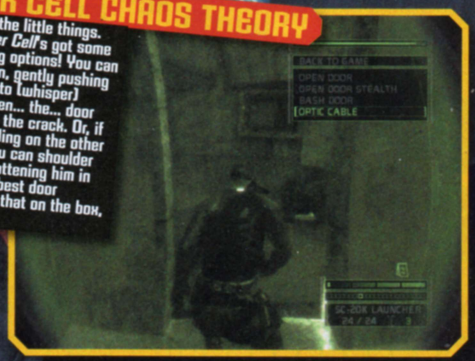
Enjoy the mag!

Robin

p18

SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY

Sometimes it's the little things. The new *Splinter Cell*'s got some ace door opening options! You can do a stealth open, gently pushing on the left stick to (whisper) gently push... open... the... door and peer through the crack. Or, if an enemy's standing on the other side of a door, you can shoulder charge it open, flattening him in the process. The best door opening ever! Put that on the box, UbiSoft!



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Exclusive review of Free Radical's shooter.

RESIDENT EVIL 4 ..... PAGE 82
Capcom get everything right with this killer sequel.

GRAN TURISMO 4 ..... PAGE 92
The most uptight driving game ever is back!

SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY ..... PAGE 18
Latest playtest complete with multi-player.

100% NEW!

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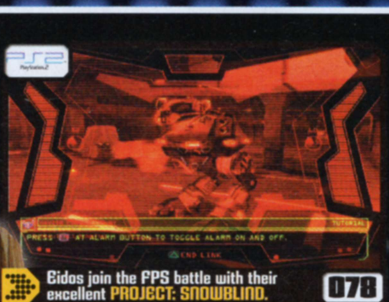
Discovery how new Xbox shooter PARIAH is more than a pretty face. 032

SPLINTER CELL: CHAOS THEORY

SAM FISHER and his magic glasses head up our incredible preview section. 018

It's the final hands-on playtest!



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TIMESPLITTERS FUTURE PERFECT

Full review of the time-bending title!

Japan's favourite hero, ASTRO BOY rips up the Game Boy Advance! 070

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Ignore the muscle top and the floppy fringe, RESIDENT EVIL 4 kicks ass! 082

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JULIA

PRODUCTION EDITOR
FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE:
King of Fighters
OLD GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REMADE:
Frogger (again)
TIME PERIOD YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT:
The one with chimney sweeps

Julia has been appalled by the terrible violence in the *Resident Evil 4*. "I can't stand to hear any stringed instrument played badly", she explained. Surely there's a spelling error there...

ROB

STAFF WRITER
FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE:
Legend of Kay
OLD GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REMADE:
It Came From the Desert
TIME PERIOD YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT:
Ancient Greece

Rob's been drinking camomile tea to make himself calmer. Initially it helped as he began to mellow. Since then though he's ripened and begun to rot.

ROBIN

EDITOR
FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE:
Resident Evil 4
OLD GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REMADE:
Skool Daze
TIME PERIOD YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT:
Victorian England

Robin is so intense and uptight, that if you stuck a hunk of coal up his ass for two weeks, he'd be furious.

KATH

REVIEWS EDITOR
FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE:
Splinter Cell
OLD GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REMADE:
Ghostbusters
TIME PERIOD YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT:
The '60s

Kath has managed to really hurt her neck, an injury which has restricted her movement. But rather than feel sorry for herself she's getting on with her life – "It's been great, ever since I hurt my neck I haven't looked back!"

DAVE

DEPUTY EDITOR
FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE:
Resident Evil 4
OLD GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REMADE:
Konami's *Ping Pong*
TIME PERIOD YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT:
The Great Depression – it can't have been that bad

"I've just been playing *Resi 4* and I've got to the where the stone sculpture of a man attacks."
Statue Dave?
"Yeah, course. Who do you think it is?"

IAN

ART EDITOR
FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE:
Splinter Cell
OLD GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REMADE:
Defender (again)
TIME PERIOD YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT:
2004 with the sports almanac of 2005

To start the new year Ian's been going on a special diet. As he explains: "It's basically a seafood diet. If I see food, I'll eat it." It's now a race between his heart and his eyesight to see which fails first.

ALI

DEPUTY ART EDITOR
FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE:
Super Monkey Ball
OLD GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REMADE:
Space Harrier
TIME PERIOD YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT:
My wedding day

Ali has just got married and spent two weeks in the Caribbean. She's back at work now which means her Honeymoon period is officially over.

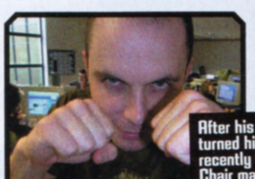
STEVE

REVIEWS AND PREVIEWS
FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE:
Oddworld Stranger
OLD GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REMADE:
NiGHTS
TIME PERIOD YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT:
1900s America

What you been playing lately Steve?
"Well I've just been reviewing the excellent *Snowblind*. Don't know why it's called that though, there's no snow in the game."
Well it's there Steve – you just can't see it.

JOEL

REVIEWS AND PREVIEWS
FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE:
Resident Evil 4
OLD GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REMADE:
Yie-Ar Kung Fu
TIME PERIOD YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT:
One Million BC, if Raquel Welch is knocking about in a fur bikini



After his Thai boxing holiday, Joel's turned his attention to wrestling. He recently had a Table, Ladder and Chair match-up. Joel defeated all three but hasn't been allowed back in Homebase since.

TOM

TIPS MONKEY
FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE:
Oddworld Stranger
OLD GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REMADE:
Citadel
TIME PERIOD YOU'D LIKE TO VISIT:
1966

Inspired by High and Mighty – clothes shop for 'tall and large man', Tom is to open his own clothes shop for the smaller man which will be called Pint-sized and Puny. "I'm expecting small things from it", he declared.

GamesMaster 2000

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Subscriptions Future Publishing Ltd, FREEPOST BS4900, Somerton, Somerset TA11 7BR. Tel: 01458 271184 **Distributed throughout the UK Newstrade by:** Marketforce, 5th Floor, Low Rise Building, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London. SE1 9LS. **Overseas Distribution** by Future Publishing Ltd. Tel: 01225 442244 **Print** Southernprint, Unit 17-19 Factory Road, Upton Industrial Estate, Poole, Dorset, BH16 5SN. **Advertisement typesetting** J Jays Ltd

Non-executive Chairman Roger Parry
Chief Executive Greg Ingham
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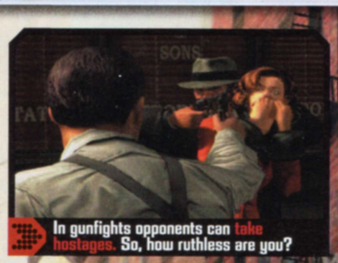
100% NEW!

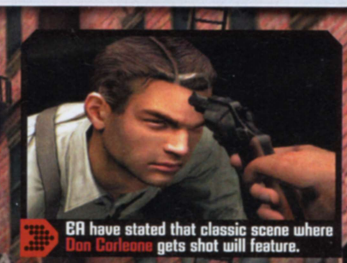
It's a vicious pack of truth! Down right dirty honesty! And everything you need to know about the month in games!

The Female of the Species is more Deadly than the Male

An anonymous Japanese female gamer, distraught after being dumped by her boyfriend, committed the ultimate act of revenge by breaking into her ex's account and deleting his precious data. Hundreds of hours of game time in the PC RPG Lineage went down the toilet as the poor gent's virtual funds were totally wiped out. Ouch.



In gunfights opponents can take hostages. So, how ruthless are you?

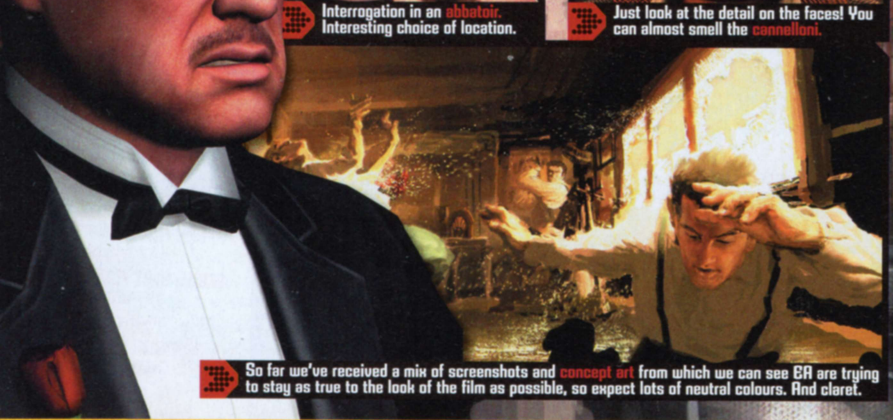


EA have stated that classic scene where Don Corleone gets shot will feature.

BRANDO THEFT AUTO!

Interrogation in an abbatoir. Interesting choice of location.

Just look at the detail on the faces! You can almost smell the cannelloni.



So far we've received a mix of screenshots and concept art from which we can see EA are trying to stay as true to the look of the film as possible, so expect lots of neutral colours. And claret.

EA reveal *Godfather* details and shots

EA have finally revealed how their eagerly anticipated *Godfather* game is going to work and what it will look like, with these early details and artwork.

EA's take on the 1972 classic film will be set in New York's Little Italy in the late '40s and early '50s. Gamers will control a member of the Corleone family who must complete missions in order to gain respect.

Following the *GTA* template for crime games, EA have used the free-roaming world approach with your created character picking and choosing their missions. As expected, the action will be based on the driving and blasting combination we've come to expect from games such as *GTA* and *Mafia*, but EA are keen to add much more character to the action.

This will partly be achieved by adding memory to all the characters so they will respond to you in an appropriate manner depending upon how you treated them earlier in the game. So if you attempt a hit on anyone, you'd better make sure they're dead.

The gameplay will be heavily influenced by the story-led cutscenes, which will merge seamlessly with the in-game action. We'll have lots more news and info coming soon.

BREAKING NEWS BREAKING NEWS: SEGA HAS CONFIRMED THAT VIRTUA TENNIS IS SET FOR THE PSP!

Separating the idle gossip from the pro-active stuff.

RUMOUR 1:

Sony's chief financial advisor has said they are having financial problems with the PS2. They expected to sell over 800,000 last year and only sold 3.

GM VERDICT 30% TRUE

We saw this on an internet forum and really believe someone has got their figures wrong here.

RUMOUR 2:

Metal Gear Solid DS could be on its way.

GM VERDICT 75% TRUE

Konami will announce big news on 27th Jan, the same day as Nintendo's DS press conference...

GTA PSP CONFIRMED!

And a round up of everything PSP

Just as we predicted last issue Rockstar will be bringing the *Grand Theft Auto* series to the PSP. The game will be developed by Rockstar Leeds and be a 'brand new iteration' set in Liberty City, so expect *GTA3* setting but with different plot and characters. The other big announcement from Rockstar is that *Midnight Club: Dub Edition* is following *GTA* to the PSP again developed by the Leeds studio.

Other PSP news concerns its multiple uses. We're well aware that it can play games and movies, but it could soon be capable of acting like a phone. Sony bigwig Ken Kutaragi has let slip that it could have mobile phone functionality in the near future, which makes sense as it could make use of the same WiFi technology that would enable the PSP to access the internet. It is already known that Sony are testing out other uses for the PSP, as a software file leaked onto the internet was believed to be an update file allowing the PSP to be used as a calculator, word processor, for e-mailling and web browsing. The software was a dummy file so didn't work but it's exciting to hear what Sony potentially has in store.

Tiger Woods PGS Tour would be perfect for long trips. As relaxing as you'd ever want.

FIFA Football could be *the* multi-player experience for the PSP if done right.

EA BIG GUNS ROLLED OUT FOR LAUNCH

Sony's PSP will be graced with EA big hitters later this year. EA has miniature versions of *FIFA*, *Tiger Woods*, *Need for Speed*, *NBA Street* and *NFL Street* currently in development. Each will feature head to head wi-fi multi-player options and original game modes for the handheldformat. This could make PSP the complete PS2 experience for gamers on-the-go.

NBA Street: Showdown with it's arcadey gameplay will really suit the PSP.

Need For Speed: Underground Rivals could tempt many casual gamers to the handheld.

NFL Street 2: Unleashed is another bouncy sport title that should suit the smaller format.

Sega unleashes Cyber-hound of the Baskervilles.

It may not be able to hold a candle to Sony in the console department any longer, but Sega Toys is biting back with a virtual bow-wow to rival Aibo. The iDog can be used to compose and play tunes, before amusing its owner by strutting its stuff to the beat. It can also express 'emotions' thanks to some nifty onboard sensors. iDogs will be ready to pick up from the pound sometime in April.

We Can't Count!

Did you spot it? Our deliberate (cough) mistake in GM 156? Well check out our DS vs PSP comparison on page 51 and add up the scores. You'll notice that if you add up the scores they both come to 47 out of 60 and not the 48 we printed. The mistake is more shameful as the person who wrote it actually has a Phd in Mathematics. They'll give anyone a degree these days...

007 GOES EAST!

Classic Bond heads EA's 2005 line-up

The Godfather isn't the only classic movie that EA will release this year, as it's been revealed that EA are currently working on a version of *From Russia With Love*. Rather than coming up with original Bond plots as they did for *Everything Or Nothing*, EA are turning their attention to the Sean Connery classic originally released in 1963. After the hero of *GoldenEye* had a 'golden-eye', we wait to see what literal translations EA make with this game. Perhaps M will be a giant M. We can only hope.

The rest of the line-up includes sequels to *Medal of Honor (Dogs of War)*, *Burnout*, *FIFA Street*, *The Urbz*, *FIFA*, *Tiger Woods* and a return for SSX. Then there's the big movie licences *Batman* and *Harry Potter* mixed in with some original titles such as *Battlefield: Modern Combat* and *Black*, the new FPS from the *Burnout* developers.

KIRBY GETS FAMILIAR

Another Code makes good use of the double screens.

Game name really takes the DS

Nintendo has released new shots of their DS line-up featuring some of their most enduring characters, and one of the worst titles we've ever come across. We have to see if people want to *Catch! Touch! Yoshi!*, but what is for certain is that no one at *GM* is prepared to *Touch Kirby's Magic Paintbrush*. Not without very good reason or gloves. Other games that sound more tempting include Anime style RPG *Another Code* and *Jump Superstars* – a four-player fighting game that's based on the comic series *Jump* and features *Dragon Ball Z* hero Goku among others.

Jump Superstars has Super Smash type action.

Hands up who want to *Touch Kirby's Magic Paintbrush*?

Good to see Yoshi getting his own DS game.

CUBE VERSION OF FIGHT NIGHT 2 TO INCLUDE SNES CLASSIC SUPER PUNCH-OUT

next-gen NOW!

While last year was all about big games, mark our words: 2005 is going to be a year of new, next-gen consoles. With only a few months crossed off the calendar we're already seeing a flurry of announcements and rumours from Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo about their next home consoles. Expect to see all three unveiled at the E3 show in May, if not earlier. And you could even have one of them under your telly by Christmas. Here's all the latest gossip...

XBOX 2 - OUT FOR XMAS?

We had our hopes winched up high that Bill Gates would unveil Xbox 2 at January's CES show. It wasn't to be. But according to both EA's leaked release schedule which shows an Xbox *Need For Speed* out at the end of the year and a recent interview with a Microsoft big cheese, a late 2005 release for Xbox 2 is looking likely. We reckon the next 'Box will be unveiled in March at the Game Developer's Conference (as with the original machine), will be seen working at E3 in May and out, at least in America, for Christmas. Rumours reckon it'll be backwards compatible with Xbox (mainly because of *Halo 2*'s online prowess), communicate with home PCs and possibly come in different specifications – with and without a harddrive.

NINTENDO REVOLUTION - PLAY ZELDA ON A GYRO-PAD!

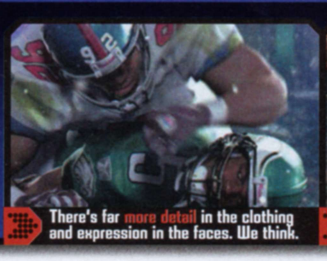
Probably the hardest of the three to pin down. Nintendo president Satoru Iwata has said the Revolution will cause a 'paradigm shift' (ie great big change) in gaming and will be unveiled at this year's E3. Further tittle tattle from an internet source reckons the machine will come with broadband out of the box, feature a hard drive, have controllers that use tilt-sensing gyroscope technology and will link up to the next-gen Game Boy. And there'll be *Mario*, *Zelda* and *Super Smash Bros* at launch. So far, so good. But there's a big whopper of a question about Revolution and that's just what is revolutionary about it. The anonymous rumourmonger behind these latest claims said, "If you think too hard you'll never guess what it is. It's nothing 'new', technically speaking. It's just something that hasn't really been applied to video games yet." Later hinting "touching is good but feeling is better." Hmmm.

PS3 BLU IS THE COLOUR!

There's a few more tidbits from graphics genies NVIDIA who are making the graphics processor for the PS3. In a recent interview, an NVIDIA spokesman said the chip set will be "the most feature-rich and powerful... we've ever created" and cheekily added that Sony were not actually calling their new console PlayStation 3. As previously reported, the tentatively titled PS3 will use Blu-ray discs that hold up to 25GB of data.

EYE SWEETS

EA recently released these shots to show what could be possible on the next gen machines. But we won't know for sure until we see stuff running on the finished consoles.



There's far more detail in the clothing and expression in the faces. We think.

This is how *Need For Speed* will look in approximately 12 months time. Maybe.

DESIGN A CONSOLE!

Before the big three pull the cloth off their new machines, we can only dream what they'll do and look like. Who could have predicted the 'Cube's size, the PS2's upright stance or the fact the green blob on the Xbox wouldn't light up? Which is where you come in. Draw (or create in the medium of your choosing) your version of any one of the next gen consoles, telling us what it'll be able to do. We'll give prizes of games merchandise for the best ones.

UNSUNG HERO OF THE MONTH!

Focussing on the good people that make our games great!

NAME: Tessa Aurmoogum
JOB TITLE: CG Character Artist at Pivotal Games

Tessa draws up the weaponry for all of SCi's *Conflict* games – *Vietnam*, *Desert Storm* and the upcoming *Conflict Global Terror*.

See these guns? Well Tessa sorted all of them out. Ain't that clever?!

How did you get your job?

I actually started here as IT Manager, but I knew I wanted to get into development. I spent a lot of time playing the games, earned loads of respect - and then got the job designing weapons, scenery and so on.

What are your qualifications?

My dad was in the army, and he took me to shooting ranges to try the weapons out. Now I'm a little gun boffin. Some of the ones we're using in *Conflict Global Terror* – which is set 10 years in the future – are cropping up in *'24'*, and I get a real thrill seeing them and recognising them on the telly.

What kind of research goes into your job?

For *Conflict Vietnam* we took trips to museums and spoke with war veterans for info on old kit. And we've got quite a few weapon experts here, so I was able to have some replica bits and pieces on my desk while I modelled them.

Gun lovers in the office? Is anyone a bit, you know... (whistles)?

Not that I know of. Everyone here is quite sane. Although I have been known to participate in mission re-enactments – which generally involve running around on the field adjacent to our offices with a replica M16.

Do those Vietnam vets put you under pressure to get things right?

It's quite difficult. People expect everything to be realistic, and those veterans will tell us if we use a rifle that wasn't actually around at the time. But the feedback is amazing – we had an e-mail from a 70-year-old guy who doesn't understand games, but loves the *Conflicts*.

TELL US YOUR UNSUNG HERO!
Do you have an Unsung Hero? Nominate a coder who's done something cool in a game and send it to gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk or to Unsung Hero at the usual address.

100% NEW!

Bill Gates and Italian Stallion jump into bed together

Fiat have launched Xbox special editions of their Punto and Stilo cars. They're loaded with extras and have black metallic paint jobs. Buy one and you'll also cop for an Xbox console and a preview version of Forza. Get down to your local dealer ASAP.

Xbox Live Sets New Benchmark

Microsoft has announced that the Xbox Live has set a new standard for gaming with more than 1.4 million gamers signed up. Obviously the release of *Halo 2* was the main cause of Live's popularity but now there's 200 Xbox Live games to choose from. Ooh! Get them.

NEW STUFF

JOYTECH SHARP SHOOTER WIRELESS LIGHT GUN

Light guns are a bit old hat nowadays, so Joytech have decided to give their popular Sharp Shooter range a lag-free wireless makeover!

Thanks to its G-Con compatibility, the Sharp Shooter worked brilliantly with every PS2 light gun game we tested, while the impressive battery life, auto reload, autofire and built-in D-pad meant this baby packed more heat than a 44 Magnum.

With no fiddly cables to trip over, you're finally free to dive around your lounge like a crazed gunman on acid. And that can only be a good thing, eh Joytech?

FROM: Joytech
CONTACT: www.joytech.co.uk
PRICE: £29.99

COMMODORE 64: 30 GAMES IN ONE JOYSTICK

Remember this? This retro-looking joystick is no ordinary controller – it's a time machine! Stick in four AA batteries, hook it up to your TV and experience classic gaming at its finest. The C64 joystick gave us cramp in five seconds flat, just like it used to in days of yore. The games themselves vary in quality from classic (*Speedball*) to crap (*Sword of Fargoal*), but they're all as addictive as heck. £30 for an import model is a tad pricey, though, so we doubt it'll retail for that much in Blighty.

FROM: Mammoth Toys
CONTACT: www.mammothtoys.com
PRICE: £29.95

FALCON HELL!

More *Star Wars* on the way...

Strike us down with a big purple lightsaber if *GM* isn't going *Star Wars* crazy this month! First of all Han Solo turned up in *Mercenaries*, then a quick blast on *Lego Star Wars* had us literally *bricking* ourselves.

Now news has trickled in that LucasArts has two – yes two – intergalactic odysseys in the pipeline. First up is the inevitable game conversion of *Episode 3: Revenge of the Sith*, although at the moment, firm details are scarcer than a Wookie with a crew cut.

From the first shots of it we'd hazard a guess that players will alternate between Obi-Wan and Anakin in romp packed with more duelling action than Luke Skywalker's Jedi academy. Fingers crossed we finally get to play as a bona fide Darth Vader!

Meanwhile, *Star Wars: Empire at War* is an RTS set just after the upcoming *Episode 3*. Think *Warcraft 3* with spaceships, and some cool-looking AT-ATs. This PC exclusive is being developed by Petroglyph, a bunch of ex-*Command and Conquer* bods, so it'll hopefully be a marked improvement on 2002's mediocre *Star Wars: Galactic Battlegrounds*. We'll keep you posted.

STAR WARS: REVENGE OF THE SITH

Neon than NFS Underground 2 could only dream of.

Dual lightsaber-wielding droids + Obi-Wan Kenobi = much fun.

STAR WARS: EMPIRE AT WAR

The Paris Dakar Rally would never be the same again.

Dad could have chosen a quieter location for the Skywalker family picnic...

Illegally parked AT-ATs renewed calls for a Tatooine 'park and ride' system.

"Please move your vessel." "Asteroids!" "Fine, be that way!"

BREAKING NEWS KONAMI HAVE RELEASED AN XBOX LIVE PATCH FOR PES4 PLAYER TO SOLVE LAG ISSUES

CAUGHT INDY ACT!

LucasArts keeping up with the Joneses...

LucasArts are famous for their *Indy* and *Star Wars* series, so it was something of a surprise when new release *Mercenaries* turned out to be a Harrison Ford-free zone. Or so we all thought... but what's this? Simply collect 20 'National Treasures' to unlock either Han Solo (Xbox) or everyone's favourite whip-cracking archaeologist himself (PS2). The hero is back!

I'm selling these fine leather jackets... AND YOU WILL BUY ONE.

For sale, owing to career change: Fastest Ship in Galaxy.

The whole city's like a big weapons shop for the Hulk. He can pick up and transform anything into a person-bashing implement.

THE ALIENS ARE COMING!

Internet sensation *Alien Hominid* finally hits consoles...

'Russian' about during a boss fight that makes *Metal Slug* look tame.

If you thought single-player was hectic, wait till your mates join in!

Alien Hominid started life as a simple web-based flash game that went on to be downloaded a whopping 9 million times. Now a 'proper' release, it's a 2D side scroller that looks a little like *Viewtiful Joe* (think hand-drawn 2D) and plays a little like *Metal Slug* (think fast-paced). We're rather looking forward to this one. Due May 2005 on PS2 and Xbox.

A HULKING SEQUEL

Going green has never been as much fun...

The last videogames that Spider-Man and Hulk starred in were worlds apart. *The Hulk* was good, but it didn't come close to *Spidey 2*'s greatness.

But from our early peek at *The Hulk 2* it seems it could all be different for the green mammoth second time round. For a start, the city the game is based in is completely free-roaming and even bigger than Spidey 2's massive Manhattan one. And the best news – because this one's based on the comic and not the film, there are no tedious Banner missions. It's all about smashing everything up, which is exactly what we want. It's due out on the PS2, XB and GC in August.

» Leon Kennedy to dress in Silver for trip to Europe.

To celebrate the European launch of *Resident Evil 4*, Nintendo will be releasing a Silver and Black special edition GameCube. This classy piece of kit will come bundled with a copy of the game as well as a demo disc featuring all of the previous 'Cube *Resident Evil* titles. Survival horror never looked so good.

» Nokia denies N-Gage is heading to console heaven

Poor old N-Gage - it's a misunderstood piece of kit. Cursed with a bunch of crap games upon release, Nokia's phone/handheld hybrid never really made up the lost ground. Malicious rumours have recently suggested that Nokia was planning to stop production, a claim denied by the Finns. Hopefully the recent crop of decent releases might get N-Gage back on its feet.

GET MASHED AGAIN!

Empire's addictive racer gets a sequel...

Empire are set to release a budget remake of their superb 2004 racer *Mashed*. *Mashed: Fully Loaded* is the same game but with two bonus environments, new cars and tournaments and twice as many track variations. Empire are also giving the graphics some extra oomph and have improved the camera.

Mashed is a super-fast *Micro Machines* style top-down racer. Whether owners of the original will want to fork out for the extra features we'll let you know when we review it, but PS2 and XB owners who have yet to take part in the *Mashed* multi-player experience will be getting a bargain this March.

Improved power-ups will make blowing up your opponents even more fun.

There's two new environments as well as old favourites from the original.

Mmm... lovely. Looks a bit like a cigarette case though.

HI-HO SILVER!SEQUEL

Streamlined PS2 comes to Argos

A quick hands up for anyone who either still doesn't own a PS2 (there's only Bill Gates that we can think of) or thinks those new silver slim line models are pretty swish. Argos Online (www.argos.co.uk) are stocking these miniscule aesthetic marvels for the princely sum of £99, and you can't say fairer than that!

Could cuddly old Santa Claus really live in a house like this?

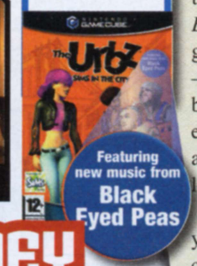
This scene doesn't have enough red in it for Agent 47's tastes.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

Agent 47 back on the job.

Everyone's favourite baldie assassin has turned his back on retirement for *Hitman: Blood Money*.

This time around 47 has been separated from the ICA, his long-time employers, and is instead hiring out his talents for hard cash. How he spends his ill-gotten gains will depend solely upon you. Sounds fun, but what's really go us hot under the collar are the amazing looking screens from IO Interactive's new Glacier engine. Wowza! PS2, Xbox and PC versions are expected Spring 2005. Should be a Hit, Man.



UNITED GAMING COUNCIL

RATINGS AND CERTIFICATION

Games publishing houses are aware of their responsibilities to consumers, and use mostly BBFC or BPLSR ratings for their games. Electronic Arts have gone one further and included their own warnings about offensive content. Good on you guys - very responsible.

GAMES MASTER SAYS

THE EVIL IS BACK IN RESIDENCE!

Capcom's monster is back and better than we could have ever imagined!

Before reading this it's probably best that you read the review of *Resident Evil 4* on page 82. From it you may gather that we're pretty excited about it – basically because it's absolutely brilliant! But *Resi 4*'s success is especially heart-warming as it was aseries that we dearly loved but felt was losing its way.

When it first came out almost 10 years ago it was a game that really captured the imagination. With its static camera angles it was cinematic, and demonstrated the kind of experience we could expect from 3D gaming. And it wasn't just technically excellent, it gave us heroes to root for, villains to fear and a whole world of intrigue to wonder at.

Sadly over the years the lure of the series has been diluted by several factors - the poor light-gun games, a retarded movie series and sequels that were excellent but seemed to lack a distinct direction. Finally it was in *Resident Evil 0* that *Resi*'s quirks and foibles had become exasperating rather than endearing, so it was clear that something had to be done. So when the new *Resi 4* was unveiled last January we applauded the new direction. It was only until we played the entire game, however, that we manage to get our heads around just how good it was. It's absolutely incredible! While other games make you work for some golden moments or require you to 'invest' time, every moment spent playing *Resi 4* is sheer joy. Where the old game often stuttered and stalled, new *Resi* rampages: Capcom have blown away every cobweb – with a shotgun.

So we're making of a point of saying thank you to Capcom for being bold enough to take a different approach and brilliant enough to pull it off, and secure *Resi* a place in our affections for the next 10 years.

If any other developer is charged with the task of reviving a series has glorious past but an uncertain future they should look to *Resi* for inspiration and maybe soon we'll be saying something similar about *Tekken*, *Driver*, and *Tomb Raider*...

F.E.A.R. V.S. S.T.A.L.K.E.R.

How many full stops is that exactly?

Drop... the... rotor... blade... and... step... away... from... the... vehicle.

The scope on that rocket launcher is just taking the mick. Bye bye Budgie...

With 2004 biggies *Half-Life 2* and *Doom 3* finally out of the way, what's a PC gamer to do with themselves? Well, you can check out these lovely new screenshots from the two most anticipated FPSs of the New Year, that's what. You lucky people.

The rivals are sporting strikingly different looks - S.T.A.L.K.E.R's gritty visual style (shown here in multi-player) is immediately reminiscent of an edgier *Half-Life 2*, while F.E.A.R. is sparkling with futuristic sheen and boasting detailed 3D environments that you can quite literally blast into oblivion. Both games are undoubtedly taking PC visuals to a new jaw-dropping level.

Whether you prefer the post-apocalyptic meanderings of GSC Game World's survival horror or the more subtle horrors of Monolith's paramilitary offering, both titles are undoubtedly shaping up to be hits of *monstrous* proportions.

Stunning weapon effects straight out of John Woo gunfight.

More blood than a bumper virgin banquet at Castle Dracula.

IT'S-A-ME, MARIO!

Moustachioed hero in cameo fest

Mario's work schedule must be the most hectic in the industry, with Nintendo confirming two guest appearances in forthcoming GameCube titles.

Dance Dance Revolution (Summer) and *NBA Street V3* (Feb) are the lucky games in question. Watch out for Luigi and Princess Peach on a court near you as well. Bada Bing!

Yeah baby, shake that thang!

Mario - he makes women weak at the knees...

Taking the big M on at BB was a big mistake...

» Master Chief steps in to aid victims of Tsunami Crisis

Even though he may not be a real superhero, the Master Chief has still managed to raise funds for the victims of the Boxing Day tragedy. How? By selling himself! Game retailer, Game, flogged its life-size model of the big guy on eBay, attracting over 6,500 page views and raising £365.51.

» Surely Amishtake? PC/furniture hybrids built to order.

Want a PC and have got $55,000 burning a hole in your pocket? You're in luck, because US firm Truvia specialise in making furniture that conceals a PC. VoodooPC provide the technology, which can be integrated into a stylish Amish cabinet.

GAMESMASTER BEST OF YEAR AWARDS 2004

Was 2004 the greatest gaming year ever? Tell us why!

With 150 issues behind us we've seen more decades come and go than Jimmy Saville. But we've never seen a year quite like 2004. With truckloads of instant classics like *Halo 2*, *Half Life 2*, *GTA: San Andreas* and *Doom 3* all vying for our affections how much better could it possibly have got? Not much. This is why we're quite literally wetting ourselves in anticipation of our all-new 2004 Best of Year Awards.

Just for a laugh we've chucked in some slightly off-the-wall topics alongside the usual stuff to see what you *really* thought of the past year. So cast your beady eyes over our wealth of categories before getting your thoughts off to *GM* Towers as quick as you can.

Remember, *GM*'s awards are the videogame equivalent of the Oscars and carry infinitely more prestige. Just ask Harry Potter actor Daniel Radcliffe how many trendy celebrity bashes *he's* been invited to since his bespectacled character claimed pole position in the 2004 crappiest haircut poll. Bwahahaha. But we digress – back to the important business of voting... There's an Xbox and two games in it for you, too.

- GAME OF THE YEAR 2004
- BEST PS2 GAME OF 2004
- BEST XBOX GAME OF 2004
- BEST CUBE GAME OF 2004
- BEST PC GAME OF 2004
- BEST MULTI-PLAYER GAME OF 2004
- BEST ONLINE GAME OF 2004
- BEST PIECE OF HARDWARE OF 2004
- BEST VISUALS OF 2004
- SOUNDTRACK OF 2004
- BEST MOVIE TO GAME ADAPTATION
- BEST CHEAT/SECRET OF 2004
- BEST MOVE OF 2004
- HARDEST GAME OF 2004
- SEXIEST GAME CHARACTER OF 2004
- MOST BADASS CHARACTER OF 2004
- BEST HANDHELD GAME OF 2004
- HARDEST BOSS OF 2004
- BEST CELEBRITY GAMING CAMEO
- BARGAIN OF 2004
- BIGGEST 'WOW' MOMENT OF 2004
- BEST IN-GAME INSULT OF 2004
- WORST DEVELOPER OF 2004
- HERO OF THE YEAR
- VILLAIN OF 2004
- THE BAD ACTING AWARD
- WORST HAIR OF 2004
- GAMING TURKEY OF 2004
- GAMING LET-DOWN OF 2004
- MOST ANTICIPATED TITLE OF 2004

YOUR DETAILS

NAME.....

AGE.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

PHONE NUMBER..... EMAIL.....

WIN!

AN XBOX AND TWO TOP GAMES!

Vote for your favourite games of 2004 and be in with a chance of winning an Xbox complete with *Halo 2* and *Fable*. We're giving them away to one lucky voter.

HOW TO VOTE:

1. Jot down your choices on this here page (or photocopy/rewrite it if you don't want to harm your copy of *GM*) and bung it in the post to GM Awards 2005, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.
2. Head your choices 'GM Reader Awards 2005' and send to: gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk

Closing date is 28th February 2005

Cut it out and send it in

IT BEGINS ON THE STREETS.
IT ENDS HERE.

SAMUEL L. JACKSON

COACH CARTER

12A CONTAINS MODERATE LANGUAGE & BRIEF SEX REFERENCES

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AT CINEMAS NATIONWIDE FROM FRIDAY FEBRUARY 25TH

(CHECK LOCAL PRESS FOR DETAILS)

100% new!

Castlevania bites back on PS2

Rumours have been leaking out of Konami headquarters that *Castlevania* is due for a resurrection on PS2 sometime this year. Tentatively titled *Castlevania: Curse of Darkness*, the action/RPG will star Hector – a Devil Forgemaster – in a tale of jealousy and revenge. We can't wait.

EA plan to take over the world!

EA have announced that they have bagged a 20% share in rivals Ubisoft. So does this mean we'll soon be seeing *Prince of Persia: Franchise of Time* with a licensed soundtrack by Snoop Dogg or *Splinter Cell: Another Sequel Tomorrow* with added GameBreaker moves soon? Probably not, but it's a scary thought...

UK Top 20 Games Chart

Could there really be a surprise re-entry for *Half-Life 2*? There's only one place to find out...

GM uses the ChartTrack chart – the only chart officially recognised by the UK software industry. Get the full 20 in *GM* every month!

ChartTrack **IT'S THE ONLY CHART THAT COUNTS!**

NO.	Last week	2 weeks ago	3 weeks ago	GAME	PUBLISHER	GM'S SCORE	WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?
1	1	1	1	Need For Speed: Underground 2 PS2 XBOX CUBE PC	EA	84%	The ultimate pimp-ass street-ride sim. Loads to do, lovely to look at and great to play. No one does the business quite like *NFS: U2*.
2	2	2	2	Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas PS2	Rockstar	98%	A game of such beauty, ambition, scale, brutal brilliance, and delicate perfection that we must all be humble in its presence.
3	4	8	8	The Simpsons: Hit & Run PS2 XBOX PC	Vivendi	80%	A real surprise and quite a treat. Nicking from *GTA*, this offers freeform driving in a well-evoked *Simpsons* universe.
4	8	4	6	Fifa 2005 PS2 XBOX PSone GBA	EA	81%	It's slick and quick and it's the best *FIFA* for years, but a few things stop it from being more than just the runner up.
5	6	6	8	The Incredibles PS2 XBOX CUBE GBA	THQ	55%	Good clean fun, but plenty of flaws to spoil the otherwise competent gameplay.
6	7	8	7	Pro Evolution Soccer 4 PS2	Konami	95%	The real footy fans' choice. As a detailed simulation this does for the beautiful game what *Gran Turismo* does for driving.
7	8	8	8	Prince Of Persia: Warrior Within PS2 XBOX CUBE PC	Ubisoft	89%	A sparkling sequel that still has the same tiny problems, but is still as beautiful to play as it is to watch in motion.
8	RE	17	RE	Football Manager 2005 PC	Sega UK	90%	Painfully detailed, utterly intricate and thoroughly absorbing, the name might have changed but greatness goes on.
9	8	7	4	Call Of Duty: Finest Hour PS2 XBOX CUBE	Activision	81%	Dull at times, but mostly cracking WW2 epic, even for those long bored by 'realistic' war games.
10	8	8	15	LOTR: The Third Age PS2 XBOX CUBE GBA	EA	78%	A lightweight, easy but solid RPG that has no famous faces, little chance to make choices and hardly any fresh ideas.
11	12	RE	RE	Sonic Heroes PS2 XBOX PC	Sega UK	78%	A teamwork-heavy sprint in the right direction, but offers only charm in place of depth. Easy to like, hard to love.
12	RE	RE	RE	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005 PS2 XBOX CUBE PC	EA	90%	Addictive, relaxing and just a bit too easy, this is a great golf game but only the 'bling thing' and Tiger-Proofing really improve it.
13	11	RE	11	The Urbz: Sims In The City PS2 XBOX CUBE PC	EA	71%	Extremely silly. Occasionally embarrassing. But a genuine giggle. Won't change your life, but your life was probably fine anyway.
14	21	RE	25	Half-Life 2 PC	Vivendi	96%	Well worth the long wait – well almost – it's one of the best games of 2004. Actually, one of the best games of all time.
15	RE	20	12	Halo 2 XBOX	Microsoft	95%	It's easy to nit-pick, but despite a woefully pulpy story, *Halo 2* is a masterly achievement and the best game on Xbox.
16	17	12	RE	WWE Smackdown! Vs Raw PS2	THQ	88%	Technically superior to its predecessor and tighter than a Scotsman's fist, this is the wrestling fan's game of choice.
17	RE	11	8	GoldenEye: Rogue Agent PS2 XBOX CUBE	EA	60%	This is the case of an incredibly stupid concept averagely executed. Just who this is supposed to appeal to, we do not know.
18	15	RE	RE	The Sims 2 PC	EA	91%	The perfect sequel to one of the most ingenious games ever. It might be the same old thing, but its got that *Sims* magic.
19	RE	20	21	Lord Of The Rings: Battle for Middle-Earth PC	EA	79%	A brilliant but rather shallow recreation of one of the finest cinematic battles ever seen.
20	RE	15	17	Spider-Man 2 PS2 XBOX CUBE GBA	Activision	90%	Move over *Driver 3* – we'd rather be leaping across rooftops. A huge step on from every other super-hero game.

Software charts compiled by ChartTrack, ©2003 ELSPA (UK) Ltd. www.elspa.com Words: Rob Taylor

5 THE INCREDIBLES

Okay, so the game might well be crap, but it's testament to how great the film is that *The Incredibles* keeps on climbing up the chart. Mind you, we'd still rather spend £40 watching the film eight times than play this shocker of a game again.

Just imagine playing tennis against her!

The Gallic cliché machine in full flow...

11 SONIC HEROES

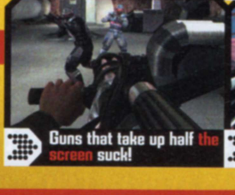
This firm favourite has been riding high in the charts since last February, despite not being very good, and this in itself is no mean achievement. Surely almost every person in the country must own a copy by now. A case of *Mario* who, eh?

Sega madness in its purest form...

The Megadrive versions were miles better anyway.

17 GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT

A worrying trend from 2004 is still going strong in 2005. Yep, the second most rubbish game in this month's chart is still being purchased by insane gamers all around the UK. You can buy an N64 and the original *GoldenEye* for the same price, you crazy fools!



Guns that take up half the screen suck!

Duel-wielding different weapons is cool though.

US CHARTS

World of Warcraft takes its place as the planet's favourite MMORPG

1	World of Warcraft	PC
2	GTA: San Andreas	PS2
3	Halo 2	XBOX
4	Resident Evil 4	CUBE
5	The Sims 2	PC
6	Legend of Zelda: Minish Cap	GBA
7	Half Life 2	PC
8	Kingdom Hearts: Chain of Memories	GBA
9	Mercenaries	XBOX
10	Madden NFL 2005	PS2

JAPAN CHARTS

No surprise to see *Gran Turismo 4* revving into pole position...

1	Gran Turismo 4	PS2
2	Super Mario 64	DS
3	Sawaru Made in Wario	DS
4	To Heart 2 AquaPlus	PS2
5	Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater Konami	PS2
6	Dragon Quest 8: Sky, Sea, Earth & The Cursed Princess	PS2
7	Mario Party 6	CUBE
8	Rockman EXE 5 Team of Blues	GBA
9	Pokémon Dash Nintendo	DS
10	Dragon Quest & Final Fantasy in Itadaki Street Special	PS2

Mini revival continues apace with Austin Mini Racing.

The loveable Mini, the quintessential icon of Britcool, is screeching onto a PC, PS2 and Xbox near you soon, courtesy of Data Design Interactive. Players will roar through backstreets and side-alleys, partaking in all kinds of stunt activity while evading the Rozzers. With a frantic multi-player mode in the offing, this one promises to be a right old Italian job!

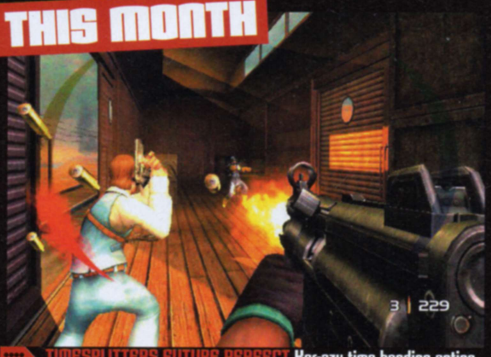
Link is back, but not how you might necessary imagine.

Now we dig the *Legend of Zelda* as much as the next gamer, but some fans will go to extreme lengths to declare their undying love. Hence this rather impressive upper-back *Zelda* tattoo, which runs from just below the fan's neck all the way down to his impressive love handles. The tattoo itself depicts Link as seen in the *Wind Waker*. The masterpiece took nine hours and was completed in a single sitting.

WATCH OUT FOR...

What's coming soon in the world of gaming...

THIS MONTH

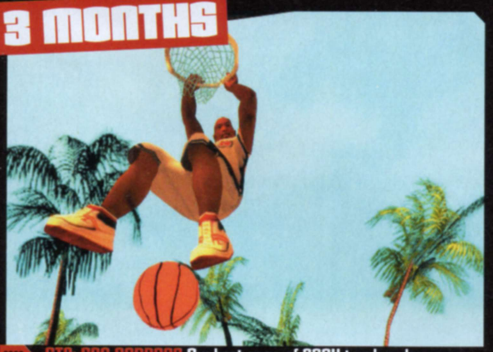


TIMESPLITTERS FUTURE PERFECT Her-azy time bending antics and some of the best multi-player FPS action we've seen.

NEXT MONTH

SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY George Clooney look-alike Sam Fisher up to his rugged neck in another conspiracy theory.

3 MONTHS



GTA: SAN ANDREAS Our best game of 2004 touches down on Xbox and PC! We're drooling over the beefed up visuals already.

THE FUTURE

CONFLICT: GLOBAL TERROR It's previewed this very issue and we can say with confidence that *Conflict 4* will rock your world.

Cut it out and stick it on the wall

GAMING CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

4th	ADVENTURES OF JIMMY NEUTRON BOY GENIUS: ATTACK OF THE TWONKIES CUBE GBA	THQ
4th	CITY OF HEROES PC	NCsoft
4th	CSI: CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION XBOX	Ubisoft
4th	DONKEY KONGA: JUNGLE BEAT CUBE	Nintendo
4th	IMMORTAL CITIES: CHILDREN OF THE NILE PS2	Sega
4th	PSI OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY PC	Midway
4th	UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2004/2005 PS2 XBOX CUBE PC	EA
11th	ASTRO BOY PS2	Sega
11th	ASTRO BOY GBA	THQ
11th	EYE TOY CHAT PS2	Sony
11th	FORGOTTEN REALMS: DEMON STONE XBOX	Atari
11th	HOUSE OF THE DEAD 3 PC	Sega
11th	STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC 2: THE SITH LORDS XBOX PC	LucasArts
11th	THE SETTLERS: HERITAGE OF KINGS PC	Ubisoft
18th	ACE COMBAT 5: SQUADRON LEADER PS2	Sony
18th	ADVANCE GUARDIAN HEROES GBA	Ubisoft
18th	DEAD OR ALIVE ULTIMATE XBOX	Microsoft
18th	MERCENARIES PS2 XBOX	LucasArts
18th	NBA STREET 3 PS2 XBOX CUBE	EA
25th	MARIO POWER TENNIS CUBE	Nintendo
25th	PRO RUGBY MANAGER 2005 PC	Digital Jesters
25th	THE ROOTS PC	Cenega
25th	SAMURAI WARRIORS XTREME LEGENDS PS2	Koei
25th	WORLD OF WARCRAFT PC	Vivendi

MARCH

1st	FREEDOM FORCE VS THE THIRD REICH PC	Digital Jesters
4th	COLD FEAR PS2 XBOX PC	Ubisoft
4th	DESTROY ALL HUMANS PS2 XBOX	THQ
4th	ODDWORLD: STRANGER'S WRATH XBOX	EA
4th	PLAYBOY THE MANSION PS2 XBOX PC	THQ
4th	PROJECT: SNOWBLIND PS2 XBOX PC	Eidos
4th	STAR WARS: REPUBLIC COMMANDO XBOX PC	LucasArts
4th	TRACKMANIA SUNRISE PC	Digital Jesters
11th	GRAN TURISMO 4 PS2	Sony
11th	DEATH BY DEGREES PS2	Sony
11th	DOOM 3 XBOX	Activision
11th	FIFA STREET PS2 XBOX CUBE	EA
11th	FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 2 PS2 XBOX CUBE	EA
11th	MARIO PARTY 6 CUBE	Nintendo
11th	SHADOW HEARTS: COVENANT PS2	Midway
18th	THE SIMS 2: UNIVERSITY PC	EA
18th	BROTHERS IN ARMS: ROAD TO HILL 30 PS2 XBOX PC	Ubisoft
18th	EYE TOY MONKEY MANIA PS2	Sony
18th	MEDAL OF HONOR: DOGS OF WAR PS2 XBOX CUBE	EA
18th	MX VS ATV UNLEASHED PS2	THQ
18th	RESIDENT EVIL 4 CUBE	Capcom
18th	TIMESPLITTERS FUTURE PERFECT PS2 XBOX CUBE	EA
25th	YU YU HAKUSHO DARK TOURNAMENT PS2	Atari
25th	BATTLEFIELD 2 PC	EA
25th	DEVIL MAY CRY 3 PS2	Capcom
25th	FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR PS2	THQ
25th	JADE EMPIRE XBOX	Microsoft
25th	METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER PS2	Konami
25th	PROJECT MINERVA PS2	Midas
25th	TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX LOCKDOWN PS2 XBOX CUBE PC	Ubisoft
25th	SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: THE MOVIE CUBE GBA	THQ
25th	TAK 2 - THE STAFF OF DREAMS PS2 XBOX GBA	THQ
TBC	TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON 2 PC	Ubisoft
TBC	CONKER: LIVE AND RELOADED XBOX	Microsoft
TBC	UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2: THE LIANDRI CONFLICT XBOX	Midway
TBC	WWE WRESTLEMANIA 21 XBOX	THQ

APRIL

1st	VIEWTIFUL JOE 2 CUBE	Capcom
1st	ADVENT RISING XBOX PC	Vivendi
1st	THE BARD'S TALE PS2 XBOX CUBE PC	Ubisoft
1st	BLOOD WILL TELL PS2	Sega
1st	COLD WINTER PS2	Vivendi
1st	DUNGEON LORDS PC	DreamCatcher
1st	PSYCHONAUTS XBOX	Microsoft
1st	THE PUNISHER PS2 XBOX PC	THQ
1st	STARCRAFT GHOST PS2 XBOX CUBE	Vivendi
1st	TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY PS2 XBOX CUBE PC	Ubisoft
15th	MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION PS2 XBOX	Rockstar
22nd	GHOST IN THE SHELL: STAND ALONE COMPLEX PS2	Atari
29th	FORZA MOTORSPORT XBOX	Microsoft
TBC	MATRIX ONLINE PC	Sega
TBC	KESSEN 3 PS2	Koei

TBC

TBC	CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 5 PC	Eidos
TBC	CROSS RACING CHAMPIONSHIP PC	Project 3
TBC	FAR CRY INSTINCTS XBOX	Ubisoft
TBC	RED NINJA PS2 XBOX	Vivendi
TBC	SUPER MONKEY BALL DELUXE PS2 XBOX	Sega
TBC	25 TO LIFE PS2 XBOX	Eidos
TBC	LEGO STAR WARS PS2 XBOX GBA PC	Eidos
TBC	KAO THE KANGAROO ROUND 2 PS2 XBOX PC	JoWooD
TBC	NEURO HUNTER PC	Deep Silver
TBC	H2: THE RETURN PC	Deep Silver
TBC	COSSACKS 2: NAPOLEONIC WARS PC	CDV
TBC	SACRED UNDERWORLD PC	Ascaron
TBC	WORLD SNOOKER CHAMPIONSHIP 2005 PS2 XBOX PC	Sega

"Based on a true story"

March 2005

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PlayStation 2

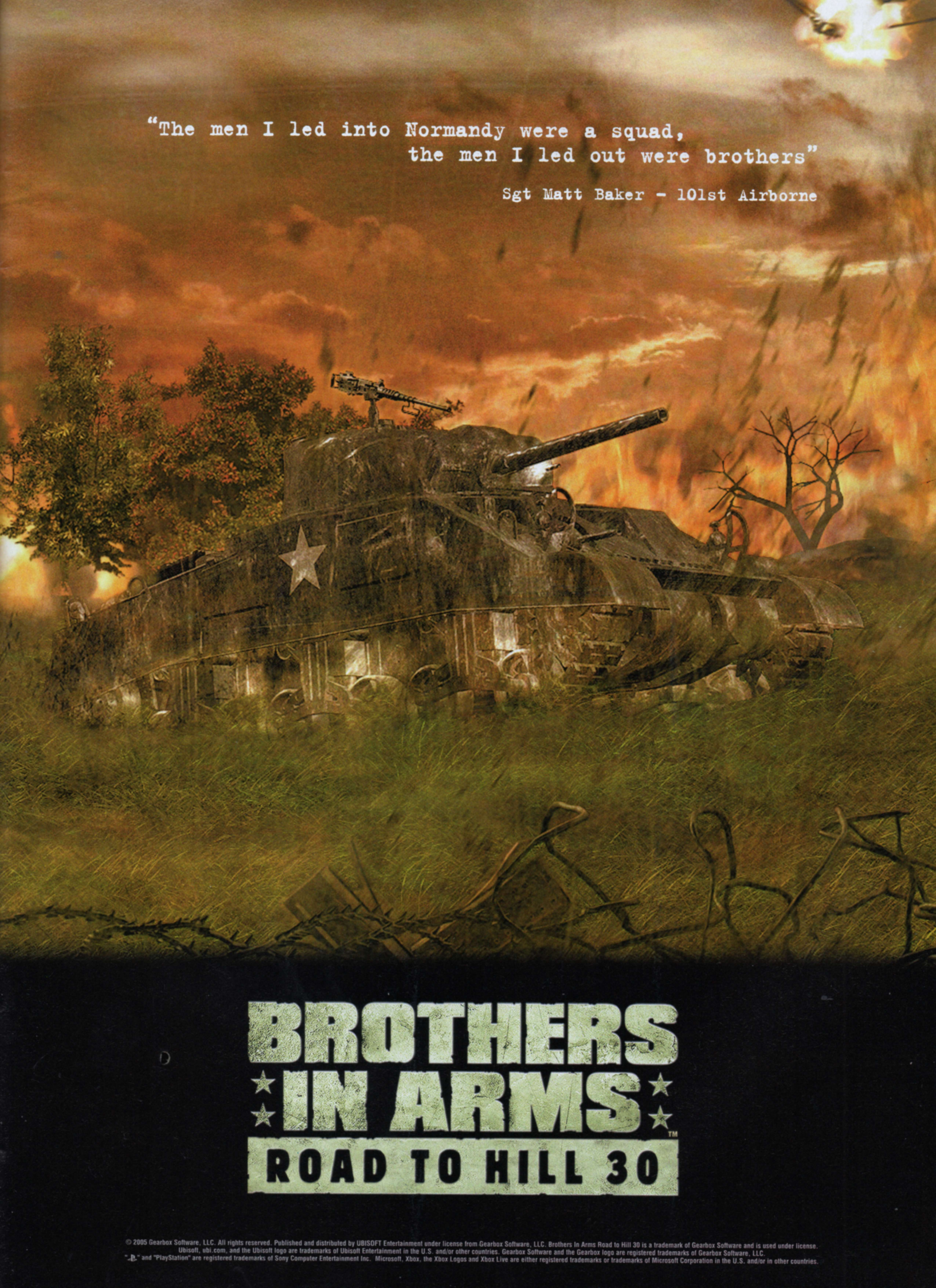
XBOX LIVE

DVD ROM

BT

gearbox software

UBISOFT



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• OUT: 1ST APRIL • FORMAT: XB • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: UBISOFT • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT
• ONLINE: CO-OP, VERSUS • OTHER FORMATS: PS2, GC, PC • WEB: WWW.SPLINTERCELL.COM • PLAYERS: 1-4

UPDATE!

LAST PREVIEWED GM156. FIRST TIME WE GET TOTALLY FREE ACCESS TO NEAR-FINISHED GAME!

SPLINTER CELL

Sam's not ready for the retirement home yet...

Sam Fisher and his sticky cams have been working overtime since their original debut on the Xbox. First, the game was converted onto every format known to man. Then, before we knew it, its sequel *Pandora Tomorrow* was released. Which was no bad thing, but getting to play *Chaos Theory*, Ubisoft's forthcoming new *Splinter Cell* game, is an eye-opener. The sequel takes the *Splinter Cell* world and expands on it significantly in both single-player and online.

The single player game begins with Sam on a Peruvian coast. It demonstrates what you can expect throughout the game, namely a lot more choices and a lot less linearity. The level features a complex network of caves with multiple paths to choose. For the most part, gone is the traditional Splinter Cell gameplay that involves a linear path split into bite-sized sections.

SUPER SNEAK

Levels involve primary and secondary objectives, and the freedom to carry them out or ignore them. A quick save option allows you to explore different paths, and methods of disposing of enemies relatively risk-free. If you're the sort of player who chooses shooting people over stealth, you've even got the choice to do that. The option to choose stealth or assault weaponry at the start of each mission and the binning of the 'three alarms and you're out' system means an end to the regimented, predetermined way the first two games were structured.

A special mention goes to the visuals as well. *Chaos Theory* is the best looking *Splinter Cell* game yet. In fact, it's likely to be the most beautiful game you'll see on the Xbox. Shadows, textures and reflections have been done perfectly. This is combined with a soundtrack that makes your heart pound like a 40-a-day smoker's running for a bus when you're spotted, making *'Cell* amazingly realistic.

Remember how excited you were when you first played *Splinter Cell*? Forget how underwhelming *Pandora Tomorrow* may have felt. Sam Fisher's back on form and it's going to be one hell of an outing. GM

Manky kitchen. And that doesn't look like a normal slab of meat there.

Need to know

What is it?

The third game in Ubisoft's *Splinter Cell* series, *Chaos Theory* is a third-person stealth/action game that has you playing as spy Sam Fisher.

Facts

- A brand new co-operative mode lets you play through unique levels either online or split-screen
- One of Sam's new weapons is a knife, which allows him to silently slit the throats of enemies
- Gone is the annoying alarm system of the previous games

Rumour

- Sam has a love interest this time.

From the people who made...

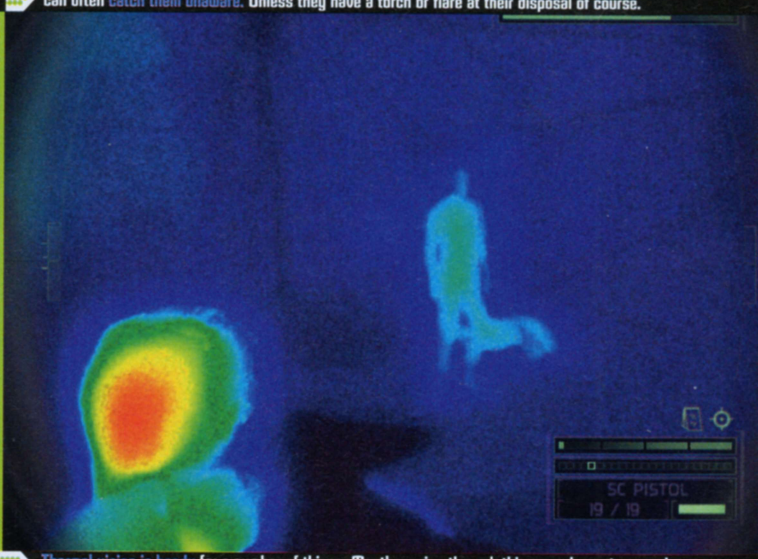
Splinter Cell 90%
Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow..84%

"CHAOS THEORY IS LIKELY TO BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GAME YOU'LL SEE ON THE XBOX"

Normal vision is the best way to see where the light and dark patches lie so you can keep yourself hidden. And it lets you appreciate just how lovely the game looks, too.

Night vision is the mode you'll use the most. Sam has an advantage against his enemies in the dark so can often catch them unaware. Unless they have a torch or flare at their disposal of course.

A new vision mode for Sam is EBV which allows him to see electrical equipment and use computer terminals.



Thermal vision is handy for a number of things. Mostly seeing through things such as steam and through certain material. So you know who's in this tent without having to cut through the canvas.

CHAOS THEORY

Although Sam still has the advantage in the dark, cleverer enemies mean it's harder to just sit in the dark, make a noise then hit them when they get close. Best of all, guards notice when other guards go AWOL and they get suspicious.

PS2 Xbox GameCube PC CD

USE AND ABUSE

The enemies and civilians you encounter as your mission progresses aren't always just there to be wiped out...

You can often interrogate characters to get useful information.

Instead of killing people, it's useful to listen to their conversations.

It's not mission over if you kill the owner of the right retinas.

If a character isn't any use though, you can always just spark them out.

ARMED AND DANGEROUS

On the mission briefing screen you can choose whether you want more assault weaponry, more stealth weaponry or a balance of both. Once again, Sam's equipped with his trusty SC-20K Launcher, too.

Activate the quick weapon selection screen by pressing the white button.

A sticky cam can be fired onto any surface. It can emit a gas, too.

The SC-20K can take out hoards of guards but ammo is limited.

Hit an enemy with the sticky shocker and they'll be electrocuted.

Your silenced pistol is best for quietly taking out the lights.

Gadgets still include the handy optic cable to see under doors.

ME VS U

Online, *Chaos Theory* is set to be even bigger than it's predecessor. As well as Versus mode, there's also a Co-op mode now. Two people team up as Shadownet spies either on a LAN, split-screen or online. They must then complete levels populated by AI enemies by working together, such as climbing on one another's shoulders to reach things, or distracting guards while their partner sneaks past undetected for instance.

The two spies have all sorts of unique moves in co-op mode.

The mercenaries have to try to stop the spies in this mode.

Spies and mercenaries have different sets of equipment.

SAM STYLE

Each of the levels is set in a completely different type of environment, from a high tech bank to a remote retreat. In typical *Splinter Cell* fashion, getting through them as smoothly as possible is preferable to having heaps of bodies lying around and your end of level rating will be higher.

01. The Hokkaido Retreat level begins with Sam outside the retreat.

02. Sneak into the first building and you see there are guards outside.

03. One of the guards may notice the candle's been blown out and come in.

04. Activate your night vision and try a new move - stabbing the guard.

05. Your first objective is to scan the number plates of two Jeeps.

06. Crawl through a crack in the wall to access the next part of the retreat.

07. Observe his patrol pattern, and judge when to sneak up on him.

08. Pressing A when you're close enough makes Sam grab an enemy.

09. Ahead, it's a good idea to take out the light with your silenced pistol.

10. Check out the piece of fabric hanging in front of the door ahead.

11. Once the guards are walking away it's safe to walk under the fabric and take out the light on the other side.

12. Along the corridor you see two guards having a conversation.

13. Activate night vision - he's got no idea you're there.

14. While the second guard's gone you can scurry through undetected.

15. You can go through the rooms or take the easier option - a vent.

16. Two guards are patrolling while an unarmed man practises martial arts.

17. One guard silently stabbed and it's safe for you to dash to the next area.

MORE THAN ONE WAY TO BUST A BANK

The levels in *Chaos Theory* are more open-flat than ever, and you have a map to help navigate each one. In previous games there were often several ways to go about tasks, but now you can take completely different paths through a level. In one of the levels, Sam has to break into a Panama bank to find out who is funding illegal activities in Peru, and there are lots of ways to do it.

Sneak right and you'll find a valve that activates the sprinkler system.

To make the task more difficult there are movement sensitive lights here.

Get past the guards easier by stealthily taking one or both out.

You can also pick off the guards in this area with your silenced pistol.

By the left side of the bank you'll find a switch to turn off the bright lights.

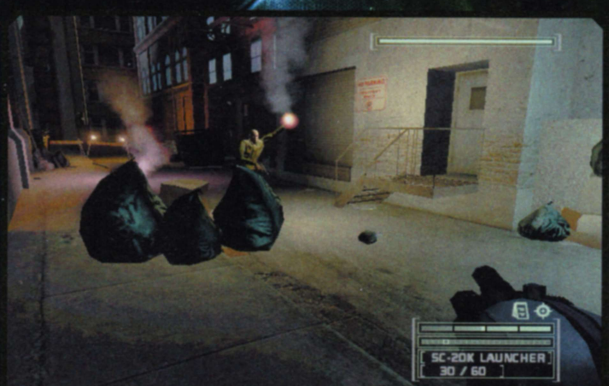
Climb this ladder to reach the roof, and activate a switch for the locks.

You can now go straight through the front door of the bank.

Weigh up your options carefully before you break the bank.

I CAN SEE YOU

The enemies in *Chaos Theory* are massively more intelligent than before. They often totally take you by surprise by climbing down ladders and noticing movements in curtains. And when they hear a gunshot they often don't hang around to be shot.



Some guards light flares to illuminate areas if they hear a sound. When they've finished with them they'll sometimes throw them somewhere randomly.

They're not only clever when they're alive. Dead, the ragdoll physics are superb. They collapse realistically and you can pick them up, then watch them slump.

LEVELLED UP

Each of the levels in *Chaos Theory* is distinctly different to the last. Your objectives will vary, and so will the rules of engagement. Security devices range from high tech lasers and cameras to good old-fashioned armed guards.

Cameras are often bullet-proof. Sneak past them when they're turned away...

The game's first level has you trying to rescue a hostage.

The extraction point in this level is at the top of the lighthouse.

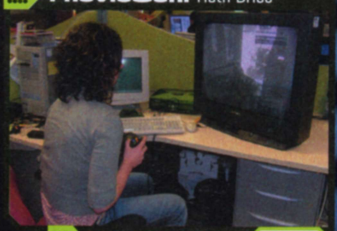
Here you're trying to find crates carrying illegal items.

HANDS ON VERDICT

SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY

HOW FINISHED? 30%

PREVIEWER: Kath Brice



CONTROLS

- A - INTERACT/USE
- X - DRAW WEAPON
- B - CROUCH/WALK STEALTHILY
- Y - JUMP
- - QUICK WEAPON CHANGE
- - WHISTLE/MAKE NOISE
- L - BACK TO WALL

WE PLAYED IT AT...

The *GM* office in darkness

WHAT WE PLAYED

- [x] Single-player missions
- [x] Versus on LAN
- [x] Versus on Xbox Live
- [x] Co-op

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Splinter Cell veterans will have a good idea of what to expect in terms of slick controls. But you soon start to see *Chaos Theory*'s differences and improvements. The AI is much smarter, and enemies will run away if they're under fire and can't see you.

ANY PROBLEMS?

Some levels require no fatalities – so it's no good if you don't like *Splinter Cell*'s stealth.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Grabbing a guard from behind, forcing him over to the retina scanner and silently slitting his throat.

VERDICT

GM LOVES

+ Multiple routes through the levels
+ Gob-smacking beautiful lighting effects

GM HATES

- Knowing we're going to get thrashed on Xbox Live

MOST WANTED METER

More intelligent, better looking and a huge step on from the last game, *Chaos Theory* deserves to be as massive a hit as it no doubt will be.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: .....Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow.....84%
BIGGEST RIVAL: .....Metal Gear Solid: Snake Eater, ...95%

• OUT: 24 MARCH • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: CAPCOM • PUBLISHER: CAPCOM
• ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: 60 HZ MODE • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: CAPCOM.COM/DEVILMAYCRY

DEVIL MAY CRY 3

Or, how Dante got his groove back...

The lighting and space-bending special effects are out in force.

This first boss is a bitch. Die three times to unlock Easy mode.

Twenty percent. That's how much less *Devil May Cry 2* scored than the original's excellent 90% score. Twenty percent – that's like losing an arm. Or a leg. Which is how *DMC2* felt, really – a limp, injured, shadow of its former self. Okay, so it wasn't a disaster as such, but it did feel like most of the sparkle and excitement had leaked out through the hole in the middle of the game disc.

Whether you agree or not doesn't matter. Because *DMC3* is looking fantastic. It backtracks through Dante's bonkers past, following a leaner, cockier devil hunter as he pops his supernatural cherry in some fine old fashion.

DANTE STOP

This trip back to his youth is more than just a plotline, however, as there's an incredible feeling of freshness, vitality and, well, spunk about it all. If *DMC2* was Dante queuing up at the Post Office to pay his gas bill, *DMC3* is Dante pulling wheelies on his BMX in a sweetshop, and loving every minute of it. It's hilariously camp, and takes itself about as seriously as a farting clown. Dante rides floored enemies like demonic surfboards and has a massive ruck in the middle of a nightclub, all the while pulling off all manner of swish new attacks and acrobatics.

The biggest change, however, is Dante's style option. There are four to choose from, depending on how you prefer to play – Gunslinger, Royal Guard, Trickster and Sword Master – with each style featuring a handful of exclusive tricks and techniques. Gunslinger and Sword Master are self-explanatory upgrades to Dante's weapons. Trickster, meanwhile, (dodge specialist) and Royal Guard (defensive specialist) are for those who enjoy playing the *DMC* games with neat skill as opposed to balls-out hacking and blasting. You can be whatever you want, really. See? It's like being a kid all over again. GM

This is the Love Planet, a gaudy nightclub that let's anyone in, alive or dead, to trip the light fantastic.

Need to know

What is it?

Intense third-person action game, that revisits the spunkier, funkier youth of demon hunter Dante, the star of the previous two *Devil May Cry* games.

Facts

- Four different playing styles
- Five types of gun and five types of sword
- Guns can be upgraded and new moves purchased by collecting Red Orbs
- Fight stylishly to up your Devil Hunter rating.

Rumour

This will be the last *Devil May Cry*.

From the people who made...

Shadow Of Rome.....85%
Viewtiful Joe 2.....88%

"IT TAKES ITSELF ABOUT AS SERIOUSLY AS A FARTING CLOWN"

UPDATE!

WE GET OUR HANDS ON THE NEAR-COMPLETE PREVIEW BUILD OF DEVIL MAY CRY 3

This chilly dog is the Ice Guardian, a three-headed monster coated in a frozen armour that needs to be blasted off. We'd hate to see his litter tray...

BANGMAN

The style that we chose to major in is Dante's Gunslinger technique. It allows you to attack from a safe and cowardly distance without ever having to get your shoes bloody, but it doesn't half make you look like a Mr Fancypants. Bullet attacks are weak, but they're noisy and satisfying. Nimble-fingered players will be able to pump out the rounds like wildfire.

Hold the ◎ button to activate multi-directional lines of fire.

The twirling rainstorm attack pelts bullets at everyone down below.

Got a shotgun? Hit everyone around you with this 'fireworks' move.

THE STYLE GURU

You can switch between Dante's four styles of play as and when you see fit. There are no rigid rules about what you should and shouldn't do, but the longer you stick with a particular discipline, the better you'll get. And it takes a *long* time to level up each of the particular styles, so we'd recommend not trying to master them all, or you'll be sat at your PS2 until the fingernails of each hand touch each other across the joypad. Here's a quick run through of the styles you'll need to master to get anywhere in the game...

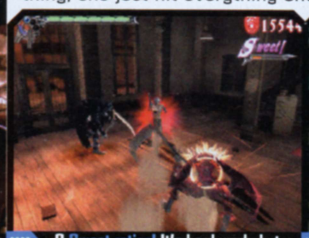
Trickster style lets you dash between enemies, and sprint along walls.

The Royal Guard is a block, which can be used to floor attackers.

Sword Master sees Dante spinning his sword like a propeller.

COOL RULES

The game rates and rewards you depending on how stylishly you fight, but it's a far more demanding system than just keeping combo's going. Variety is the key to earning those S-ranked 'Sweet' ratings, as performing the same set of moves over and over won't earn you any applause on the combat catwalk. Try juggling everything in your arsenal – swift gun attacks, enemy-launching sword combos and weapon swaps – to keep that style-o-meter bubbling over. Take just one hit, though, and your rating will be reset to an insulting D-graded 'Dope'. Or you could just forget about the vanity of the whole thing, and just hit everything until you start laughing.



A Sweet rating! It's hard work, but oh so worth the blisters...

Impress this statue with your skills and... well, that would be telling.

CRY-KEY!
Dante relives his youth

KILLOLOGY

So, what weapons are right for your fights? Short answer: all of them. Long answer: All of them, one after another, and repeat for good measure.

Ebony and Ivory, Dante's handgun twins, make a loud return.

The pistol and shotgun can be charged to give some bonus wallop.

Dante's sword, Rebellion, is as dangerous and satisfying as ever.

Kung fu flails are a belting new addition to your toolkit 'o' death.

SPEAK OF THE DEVIL

GM talks to Tsuyoshi Tanaka, Producer of *Devil May Cry 3*

Q *DMC3* has some remarkable cutscenes. Where did you come up with the idea for these?

A They're there as a feel-good factor for gamers, and are intended to be crazy and stylish. There's 90 minutes' worth of cutscenes in the game, so even if you do just one mission and you're exhausted, you watch a cut-scene and get reeled in to play again.

Q *DMC3* features a younger Dante. Was this to give yourselves a chance to include more comedy and fun?

A Well, the game is about being stylish and crazy, and everyone is a bit crazier when they are younger, which makes for a more interesting story.

Q How important are the different styles to *DMC3*?

A The styles are crucial, as they make the game appeal to the core *DMC* gamers, but also the more mainstream players.

Q How do you feel about games like *Van Helsing*, which borrowed heavily from *Devil May Cry*?

A Rather than taking it as a compliment, I feel a bit of pity that they couldn't come up with anything new, and had to copy.

Q Do you feel that you've gone as far as you can with the *Devil May Cry* series?

A Other producers may be able to make something better than *DMC3*, but right at the moment I don't think that's likely to happen on the PS2.

Q Anything you'd like to have added to the final game?

A I can't think of anything I've missed out. Technically, it's quite complete as a game. And there are lots of elements to play with, and even when you've completed a mission, there are little bits to go back and look for.

Q Where did the idea for different fighting styles come from?

A The first few were quite easy to come up as they are extensions of Dante's abilities. Several of the development team had worked on Capcom's Street Fighter, and so we incorporated moves from that.

Q Any movies that influenced DMC3?

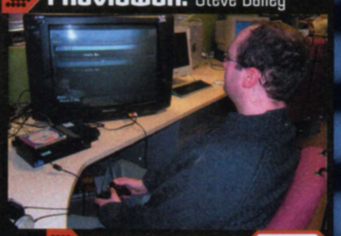
A I can't pinpoint one in particular. Saying that, when I was making *DMC2*, I used to watch *Die Hard*. Bruce Willis gets beaten up and becomes bloody and sweaty, but still manages to look like a hero. I like that technical side.

Some levels give you a small amount of camera control, but you'll be too busy ruining faces to care.

HANDS ON VERDICT

HOW FINISHED? 35%

PREVIEWER: Steve Bailey



CONTROLS

- ⊗ - JUMP/DODGE
- □ - FIRE GUNS
- △ - SWORD ATTACK
- ○ - STYLE-SPECIFIC SKILLS
- R1 - LOCK-ON
- L2 - SWITCH SWORD WEAPONS
- R2 - SWITCH GUNS
- SELECT - TAUNT

WE PLAYED IT AT...

GM towers, our feet in ice

WHAT WE PLAYED

- ☑ First seven missions
- ☑ Made our fingers hurt
- ☑ Gained S ranks on first two missions

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Like eating 20 Mars Bars then doing a bungee jump – completely mental. You leap around like a cat on a bed of nails, while blasting and chopping everything that moves, while lots of really nasty monsters try to bite you dead. So easy to understand but exhausting in practice.

ANY PROBLEMS?

You'll need fingers like tree trunks and put in plenty of hours to get the most out of it.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Using the Gunslinger skill to fire your pistols and shotgun in every direction. Hyper cool stuff.

VERDICT

GM LOVES

- + Plashy, OTT action
- + The new moves
- + Tingly fingers from breathless battling

GM HATES

- – Those fixed cameras
- – It's still hard as bricks
- – Restart points can be a pain

MOST WANTED METER

The code we've played seems nearly finished, and it's excellent. Cracking visuals and some ultraviolent fights mean this could be the best *DMC* yet.

GAME 92%

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ...Van Helsing 70%
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...Onimusha 3 92%
OUT SOONER: ...Shadow Of Rome (PS2), 14th February

- OUT: 15TH APRIL
- FORMAT: XB
- PRICE: £39.99
- DEVELOPER: ROCKSTAR SAN DIEGO
- PUBLISHER: ROCKSTAR GAMES
- ONLINE: MULTI-PLAYER
- OTHER FORMATS: PS2
- CONTACT: WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/MIDNIGHTCLUB3
- PLAYERS: 1-4 (1-8 ONLINE)

PIMPING YOUR RIDE

You've got enough cash to buy one of six fairly basic cars, but winning races bags you money to improve it beyond recognition.

A few laps of the San Diego side streets'll take the glean off your car.

Change parts like the front bumper to ensure you've got unique cars.

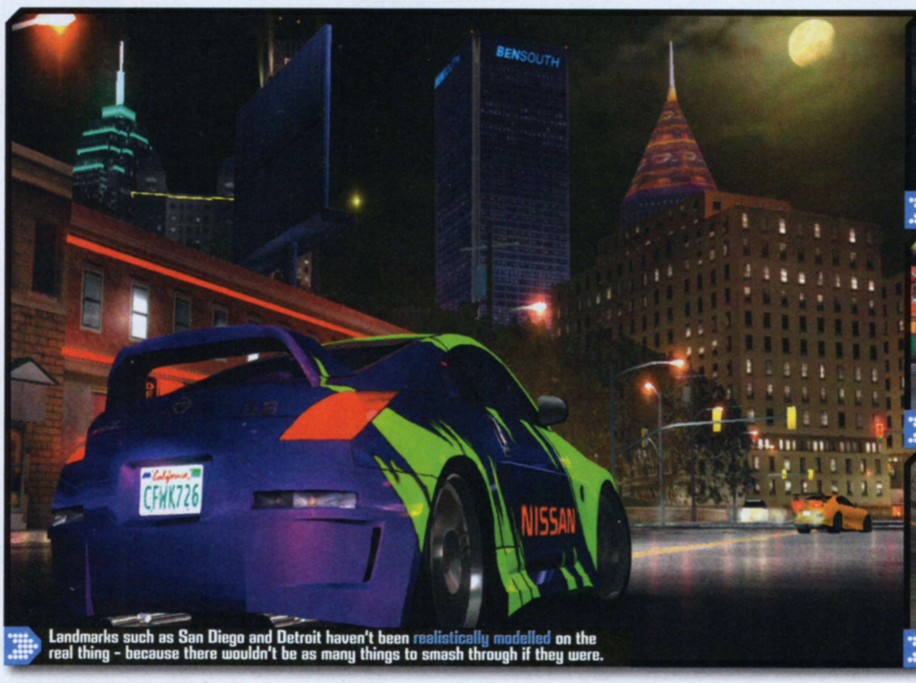
A standard un-tweaked car won't keep you winning races for long.

The attention to detail is incredible. Just check out those fully 3D rims.

A TALE OF THREE CITIES

Midnight Club's three cities are vast. The format's the same as the last game – you cruise around looking for other racers. Once you find one, flash your lights to indicate you're up for it and follow them to the race line.

NEW SHOTS!



Landmarks such as San Diego and Detroit haven't been realistically modelled on the real thing – because there wouldn't be as many things to smash through if they were.

There are loads of different kinds of races to take part in.

Crashes can be spectacular and vehicles show proper damage!

In between races you can cruise through the cities at will.

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION

Rockstar's super-cool street racer is back with more...

Brits don't have quite the same sort of car modding scene that they do in the US – if you're lucky you might see a Ford Escort kitted out with neon and tinted windows circling your city centre forty times on a Saturday night. But Weston-Super-Mare isn't exactly California, and some dude cruising with the windows down and the bass pumping in a his pimp-mobile is more likely to attract mocking laughter than approval and flocks of bikini-clad ladies.

Still, that's not to say we don't like the idea of spending oodles of cash on crazy hydraulics, spinning rims and nitrous oxide. We most certainly do, and if you're not convinced you do, five minutes in *Midnight Club 3*'s garage with just a VW Golf and $5000 to pass the time should persuade you otherwise.

With the career mode now up and running, the latest *Midnight Club* instalment is looking more impressive than ever. While everything that made the last game great remains, the quality of the graphics has been ramped up tenfold and the customisation options, largely thanks to its DUB car magazine tie-in, are immense. Once again, you've got the option to free roam each of the three huge cities, choosing which racers to challenge for cash or prizes. And again the street races are open plan – whether you decide to take the main road or smash through shop fronts is up to you.

ON TRACK

Just to add a bit more adrenaline to a game that already shifts slightly too quickly for you to take your eyes off the road, slip-streaming gradually fills up a red bar to the right of the screen. Once it reaches the top, hitting X gives you a turbo that separates the Schumakers from the Skoda drivers, and can take you from 5th place to pole position in five seconds flat.

If there's one thing *Midnight Club 3* won't be accused of, it's lacking thrills. Like a freer *Burnout* and a brighter *Need For Speed Underground*, you'd be madder to miss this than to park a newly pimped Corvette in a Moss Side NCP. GM

BIKE IT

As well as cars, *Midnight Club* has a selection of bikes that can also be modified. Controlling the bikes is easier than it was in the previous game, but it's still ridiculously fast.

On your bike you can race against other bikes and cars.

Need to know

What is it?

The third game in Rockstar's *Midnight Club* series, this is the first game in which Rockstar have teamed up with US custom car mag DUB.

Facts

- Features over 80 fully customisable licensed vehicles including import cars and motorcycles
- Hundreds of fully licensed parts to fit on your vehicles so you can create exactly what you want
- You get to tear around citites such as San Diegio, Detroit and Atlanta

Rumour

- You can unlock Snoop Dogg's ride.

From the people who made...

Midnight Club 78%
Midnight Club 2 ..... 87%

HANDS ON VERDICT

MIDNIGHT CLUB III

HOW FINISHED? 30%

PREVIEWER: Kath Brice

Rockstar's secret demo room, reconstructed for this picture.

CONTROLS

- R - ACCELERATE
- L - BRAKE
- A - HANDBRAKE
- X - TURBO/USE NITRO
- WHITE - FLASH LIGHTS
- ⬅ - CHANGE SONG TRACK
- BACK - SHOW MAP OF CITY

WE PLAYED IT AT...

Rockstar's demo room

WHAT WE PLAYED

- Career mode
- Arcade races
- Online/network
- Create a race

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Exhilarating doesn't begin to describe *Midnight Club 3* – it's fast, frantic and intense. The smart AI drivers take different routes each time and you can't predict what's going to happen next – we had a bus plummeting towards us on its side in one race. Excellent.

ANY PROBLEMS?

We didn't encounter anything that concerned us. The bikes are pretty tough to win races, though.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Getting a turbo from a slipstream and going into first to win by a 10th of a second is a great feeling.

VERDICT

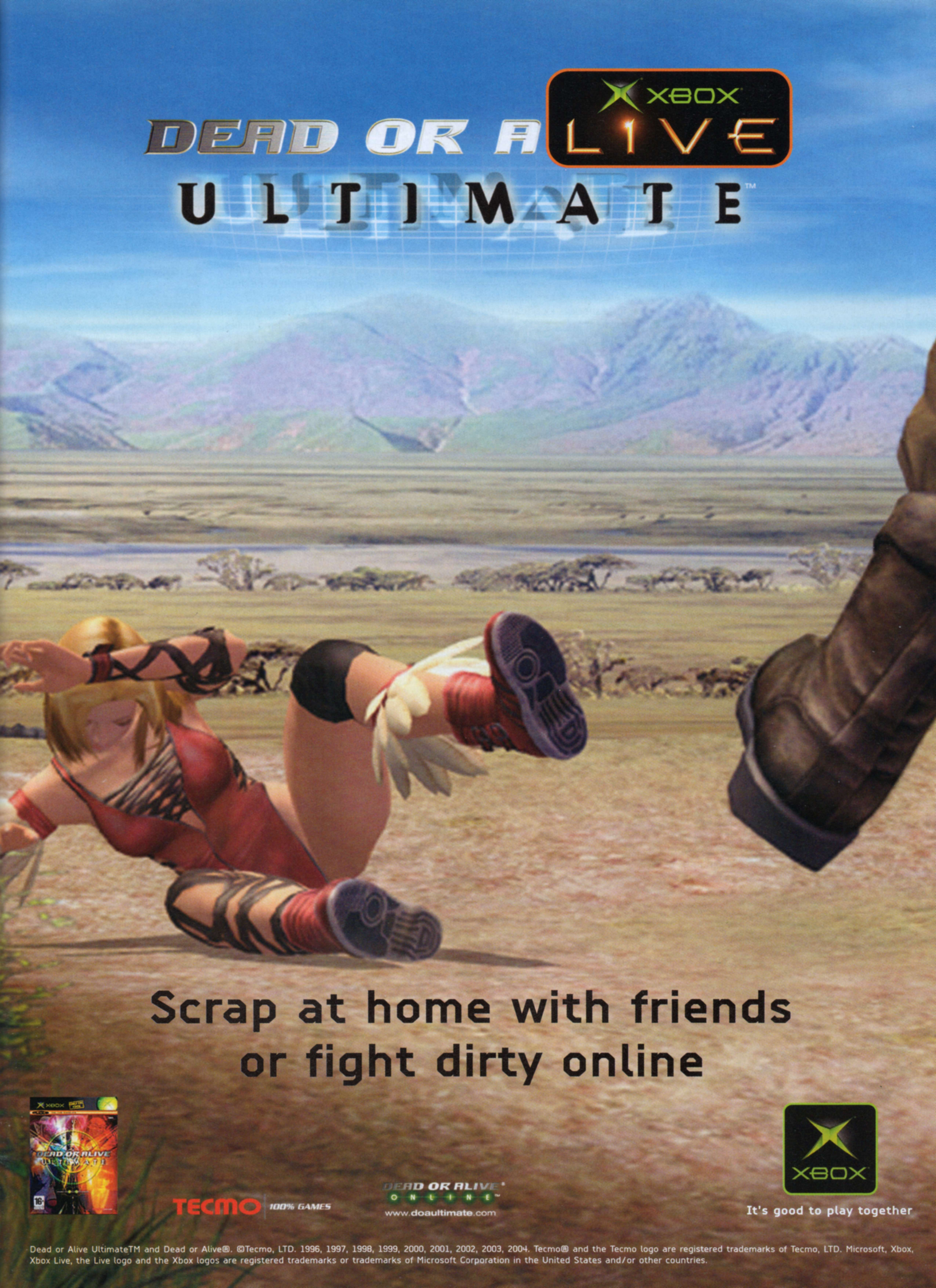
GM LOVES
+ From the showroom to the streets, this is one of the best looking racers out there

GM HATES
– Getting dry eyes from staring at a game that moves this fast for too long

MOST WANTED METER

MC 2 was great but this improves on it to no end. With loads of multi-player and online options, we can't wait to play the finished game.

CAN'T WAIT?
MOST LIKE: ...Midnight Club 2 (PS2, XB, PC)
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...Need For Speed Underground 2



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• OUT: 11TH MARCH • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: EA CANADA • PUBLISHER: EA
• ONLINE: VERSUS, CO-OP • OTHER FORMATS: XB, GC • CALL: 01932 450000 • PLAYERS: 1-4

FIFA STREET

Turf this one out on the streets...

A paunch-free Ronaldo unleashes the Cruyff turn on Goldenballs.

'Her name is Rio and she dances on the sand. Just like that river...' etc.

Need to know

What is it?

FIFA Street is the latest EA sports series to 'benefit' from a Street makeover. Strut your stuff in glamorous locations including the beaches of Rio, the streets of Rome and Welling Garden City leisure centre. Okay, ignore that last one.

Facts

- Features dynamic one-on-one encounters, so beating your man requires more skill than ever before
- Transform your team from no-hopers into an irresistible force on the streets in Rule the Street mode
- Light up the match by using the Trick Stick to pull off extreme flicks

Rumour

- Hing of beach footy - Cantona - to make a cameo appearance.

From the people who made...

Def Jam: Fight for New York..... 85%
Madden 2005..... 89%

Just when we thought that EA's *Street* series had left the beautiful game untouched, along comes *FIFA Street* to rip the guts out of our national pastime. Lovely.

Street's default game mode is a four-on-four match-up, and if you thought *FIFA* was arcadey then, boy, are you in for a shock. There's also a Career mode of sorts where you build your team in the Rule the Street mode.

You'll get a kick from seeing top players such as Ronaldo showing off his silky skills on the streets of Rio, although the visuals were a little ropey in the preview code we played.

Our main reservation is that without the laws of the game to base things on, EA have reworked footy in their own style and it all just feels so very... Americanised. Where are the good old kickabouts on Hackney Marshes or the ill-tempered clashes down at the local leisure centre?

FOOTIE USA

It's not that street footy isn't a nice idea – it's fun to flick Sky on and watch past maestros of the beautiful game like Eric Cantona parading their silky skills on some tropical beach, but *FIFA Street* is way too flash.

Perhaps we Brits just can't relate to this kind of kickabout, especially when it's accompanied by inane Mockney commentary in a vain attempt to add some cool appeal.

All things considered, *FIFA Street* is shaping up to be the perfect post-pub game. Doubtless when we've got a pint or five inside our rotund bellies, the flashy trick moves and GameBreaker shots will seem as groovy as heck. But while we remain sober we just can't see this shifting *Pro Evo* from our top spot. Perhaps one Street too far, then...

Rob Taylor GM

MEET THE POSSE...

In *FIFA Street* you won't be playing as some scummy street kids, but as world superstars from top leagues including England, Spain and Italy.

Placcy Ronaldo looks even more camp in FIFA Street than in real life.

The Brazilians are the best team - imagine playing as the two Ronnies!

G'day to a hopefully injury-free Harry Kewell and the rest of the Socceroos.

The Spanish lads sport tracksuits so bad even a cyclist would blush.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Seeing Becks in his civvies. Lovely thighs...
+ Playing Brazil on the streets of Rio

GM HATES
- Commentary that's faker than Jamie Oliver's cockney accent
- It's another *Street* game!

MOST WANTED METER

It could be a laugh-a-minute with your mates for a short while, but as stands *FIFA Street* is looking all style and no substance.

6 5 2 1

• OUT: 25TH FEBRUARY • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: BLUE 52 • PUBLISHER: HIP INTERACTIVE
• ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: XB, PC • CALL: 020 780 870 97 • PLAYERS: 1

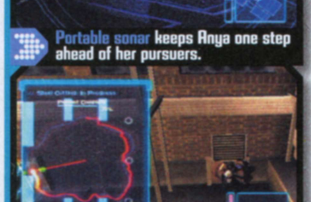
STOLEN

01 THIEF!

Aside from being a total hottie, Anya's resourcefulness is truly something to behold.

Every thief and pervert's best friend - night vision goggles.

Portable sonar keeps Anya one step ahead of her pursuers.



This babe even packs her own blowtorch! Hot stuff indeed.

Our strap line has been nicked!

Remember the film *Entrapment*, where lycra-clad cat burglar Catherine Zeta Jones spent most of her time contorting her body into a variety of exciting positions? We bet you do. Well, the star of *Stolen*, Anya Romanov, is very reminiscent of Swansea's finest – meaning we could have a new gaming sex object to rival the lovely Lara Croft in our affections.

Together with her partner in crime Louie Palmer, our high-tech pickpocket is drawn into your typical web of lies and corruption that threatens to turn the world on its head.

IT'S A STEAL

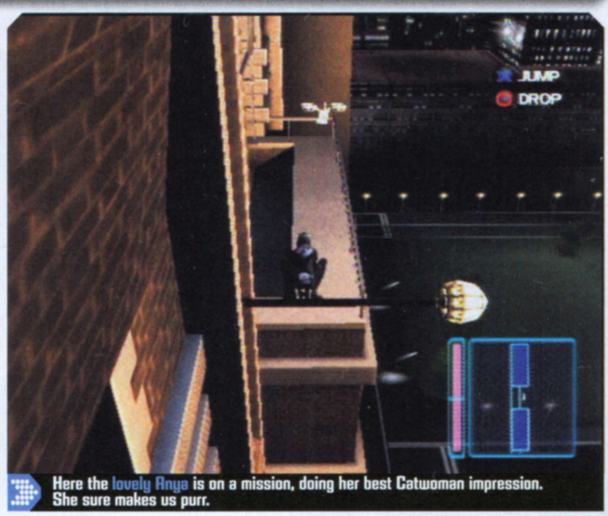
The well-animated Anya is quite the gymnast, crawling along ledges, sneaking past guards and leaping from the rooftops in her quest to pinch stuff. She's also loaded with gadgets such as nullifiers, night visions specs and sonar gear that all make her dirty job that little bit easier.

If our heroine does have a weakness, it's her lack of brawn; direct fisticuffs are strictly a last-ditch tactic. You can, however, plant a tracker dart into guards' backsides before sneaking up unawares and placing them in a chokehold. Watch your back when they wake up though!

Stolen's four huge levels are loaded in their entirety, meaning you can't exploit the old 'leg it to another area' A.I loophole to escape detection. Each non-linear mission has primary and secondary objectives, as well as featuring a novel series of mini-games whenever Anya needs to crack a safe or cut through a steel barrier.

From what we've played so far, Anya has already 'stolen' our hearts. Heh.

Rob Taylor GM



Here the lovely Anya is on a mission, doing her best Catwoman impression. She sure makes us purr.

Need to know

What is it?

Stolen is a third-person stealth-'em-up from new kids on the block Blue 52. The first game of this type where you can't actually kill anyone, *Stolen* encourages players to use brain before bullet. No - don't turn over! - *Stolen* actually looks pretty good.

Facts

- Advanced real-time lighting and shadow effects mean you have to stay more alert than ever.
- Enemy A.I so crafty you'd think your enemies were psychic.
- Features a heroine so lithe and supple even Lara Croft is jealous.

Rumour

- Munch's *The Scream* is a hidden item.

From the people who made...

Nothing so far...

A token game babe, Anya was little more than a piece of meat.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Anya Romanov and her gizmos
+ The ingenuity of the mini-games

GM HATES
- Textures that look bland at best
- Guards more determined than the bloody *Terminator*

MOST WANTED METER

With more tricks up its sleeve than Paul Daniels, and better looks than Debbie McGee, *Stolen* has sneaked its way into our affections.

6 5 3 2

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OUT: TBC • FORMAT: XB • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: MICROSOFT • PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT
ONLINE: VERSUS, BUY AND SELL • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • CONTACT: 0870 601 0100 • PLAYERS: 1-8

FORZA MOTORSPORT

Just a quick hands on forza moment...

Everyone seems to be getting in on the *Gran Turismo 4* copycat act this issue, from Konami with their buttock-clenchingly boring *Enthusia* to this effort from Microsoft that's been in the works for well over two years.

The big M has leveraged the full extent of their financial muscle to buy every official car and track licence you could think of. The result is an experience *so* similar to *GT4* that you can almost smell the whiff of lawsuits in among the exhaust fumes.

Being an authentic racing simulation, *Forza*'s staggering range of rides have to be given the respect they deserve. So drive like a teenage joy rider and you'll be paying for the AA to salvage your car quicker than you can say "12 month ban".

Thankfully, Microsoft know that we're not all as talented as Tiff Needell, so they've introduced an assist system that allows players to automate stuff such as stability and ABS braking.

ROAD WORKS

The promised amazing road physics aren't exactly apparent yet, and the racing experience doesn't hit the heights of *Project Gotham Racing 2*, but to compare the two games is missing the point. This game is hardcore, pure and simple.

Pimping your ride is almost as complex as the actually racing. We modified engines, bunged on a spoiler or three and debated long and hard over which brand of tires to choose.

This preoccupation with visuals is the one aspect of *Forza* that might just get *Gran Turismo* fans a little hot under the bonnet. Some of the most detailed textures we've seen on the black box are complemented by all kinds of bloom lighting, particle effects and shadows that make *Splinter Cell* look basic.

So despite being mildly impressed rather than blown away, *Forza* definitely has the potential to run *Gran Turismo 4* right to the finish line. From this early build we're confident that a plucky young concept car has emerged to challenge Polyphony's auto hegemony. GM

Need to know

What is it?

Microsoft's take on the driving simulation phenomenon. *Forza* will be Xbox compatible, so players can compare gearstick sizes online.

Facts

- Transform production models into race cars fit for a king with a tuning and bodywork system
- A career mode to rival *GT4* with Xbox Live compatibility
- Train AI racers with Drivatar technology so they can race for your team

Rumour

- Clarkson is an unlockable character.

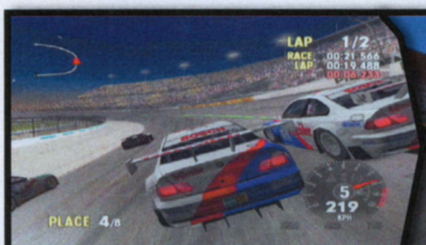
From the people who made...

MechCommander 2: 80%
Links 2004: 84%

VIEW TO A THRILL

As is to be expected from a game that wants to out-Turismo *Gran Turismo*, *Forza* boasts a mouth-watering selection of courses to tear up. From world famous circuits such as Germany's Nürburgring and our very own Silverstone to the streets of Tokyo and Rio de Janeiro, *Forza* is aiming to provide something for everyone. Just check out the unique look of each track...

NEW SHOTS!



Sunset Peninsula Speedway: Here's two swish GTR Beema's to drool over at once.

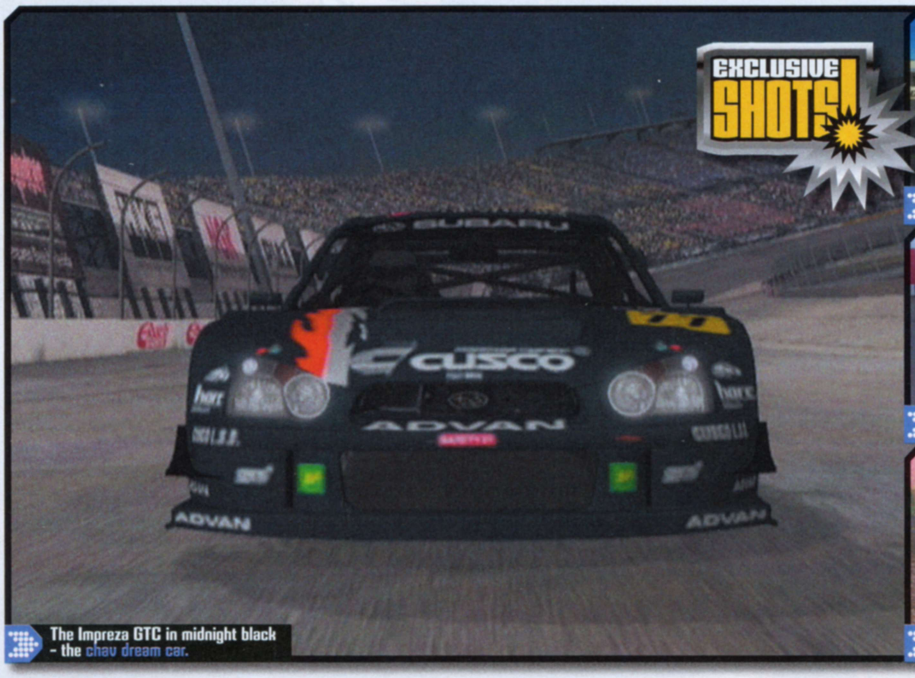
Tsukuba: Who cares if our Porsche Boxster is eighth? It's the taking part that counts.

Racing a bog-standard Honda Civic is great preparation for braving Tesco car park.

TOP GEAR

Forza boasts a garage packed with more models than Eddie Irvine's bedroom, with over 200 cars from 45 manufacturers including Porsche, Ferrari, and Honda. Microsoft are also promising us levels of customisation that put *Need For Speed 2* in the shade.

EXCLUSIVE SHOTS!



The Impreza GTC in midnight black - the chav dream car.

The Nissan Skyline Calsonic is simply too gorgeous to describe.

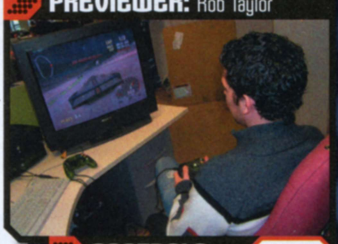
Ferrari's F333 is one of *Forza*'s quickest cars, but looks so '90s.

Chevrolet's Corvette Z06 is identifiable by its patriotic paintjob.

HANDS ON VERDICT

HOW FINISHED? 80%

PREVIEWER: Rob Taylor



CONTROLS

- A - BRAKE
- B - GEAR UP
- Y - LOOK BACK
- X - GEAR DOWN
- L - BRAKE/REVERSE
- R - ACCELERATE
- CAMERA
- HUD

WE PLAYED IT IN...

GM's hot seat

WHAT WE PLAYED

- [x] Arcade mode
- [x] Career mode
- [x] Multi-player
- [x] Time Trial

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

We've be lying if we said *Forza* plays as brilliantly as it looks. Compared to *GT4*, races feel slightly rigid and false, with little or no subtlety in the car handling. The various camera angles don't feel quite right yet either.

ANY PROBLEMS?

Apart from some handling issues that can be ironed out with more testing, *Forza* is just about ready to rub wheel trims with Polyphony's finest.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Gawping at the awesome range of cars that rival *GT4* in terms of numbers and attention to detail.

VERDICT 91

GM LOVES

+ Heavenly looking vehicles and tracks
+ Pimping our rides more than Xzibit

GM HATES

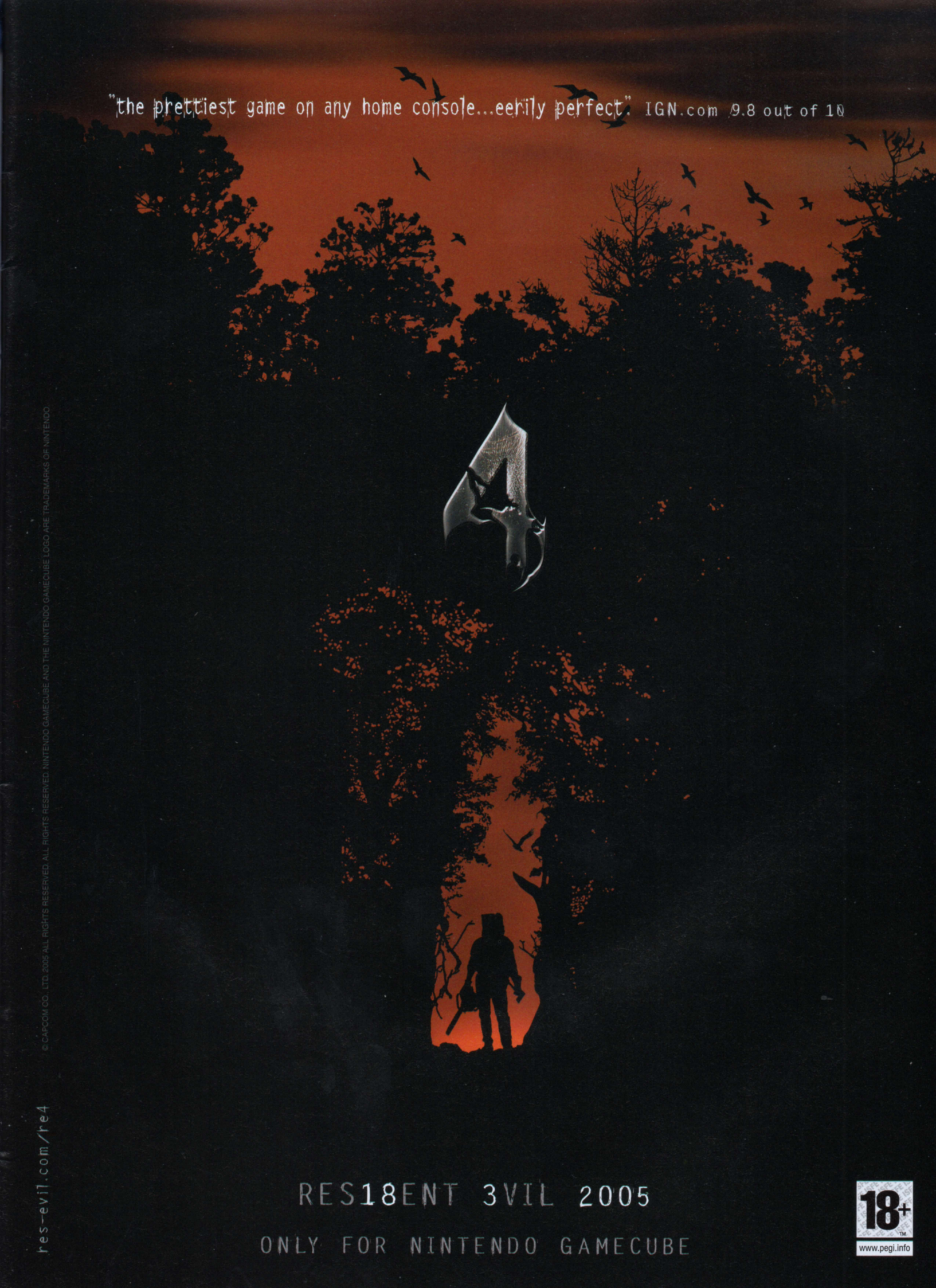
- Handling less forgiving than a combine harvester
- Getting beaten by the tough AI drivers

MOST WANTED METER

The bodywork and paintjob are looking mighty fine, but if *Forza* is aiming to be the Xbox equivalent of *GT4* the engine needs a bit of an overhaul.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ...Gran Turismo 4, 95%
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...PGR2, 93%
OUT SOONER: ...Enthusia, March


"the prettiest game on any home console...eerily perfect." IGN.com 9.8 out of 10
4
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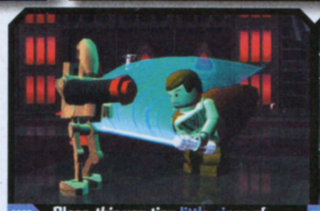
OUT: APRIL ■ FORMAT: XB ■ PRICE: £39.99
DEVELOPER: TRAVELLER'S TALES/AMAZE ■ PUBLISHER: EIDOS ■ ONLINE: NO
OTHER FORMATS: PS2, PC, GBA ■ CONTACT: 020 8636 3000 ■ PLAYERS: 1-2

SUPER STARS

A large chunk of your thrills in the game will stem from all the familiar things you'll delight in seeing, visiting, flying... and of course, killing.


Clone *this* you tiny little piece of metal crap!

Check out the yellow and green Naboo N-1 starfighters.

Winged aristocrat Genosians are a bit handy with their blasters...

Pink lightsabers are for cissies. And what's up with the bald bonce?

LEGO STAR WARS

A million childhood fantasies finally come true...

Back in the day, *GM* fondly recalls being thrilled by the antics of Luke Skywalker and co., before scampering off to our bedrooms to recreate the majesty of the Millennium Falcon using only some LEGO bricks we'd discovered behind the sofa.

Years passed before LEGO finally gave the world proper *Star Wars* model kits, but by then we were all grown up and had to earn a living instead of arseing around in our bedrooms. Luckily, we've also been able to play the coolest thing since Darth Vader finally revealed his bloated mug in *A New Hope*. Yep - *LEGO Star Wars* is coming to a console near you.

By taking control of Qui-Gon Jinn and Obi-Wan Kenobi, you quickly begin to get to grips with the trusty lightsabers and force powers in the co-op mode. Just by pressing start, players can dive in and out of the action.

BLOCK ROCKIN'

Besides using force powers to fling objects around and blow things up, you can swap minds with friendly droids and the odious Jar Jar Binks. You can then use their special abilities to solve puzzles or reach otherwise inaccessible areas. You see, teamwork plays a big part in *LEGO Star Wars*.

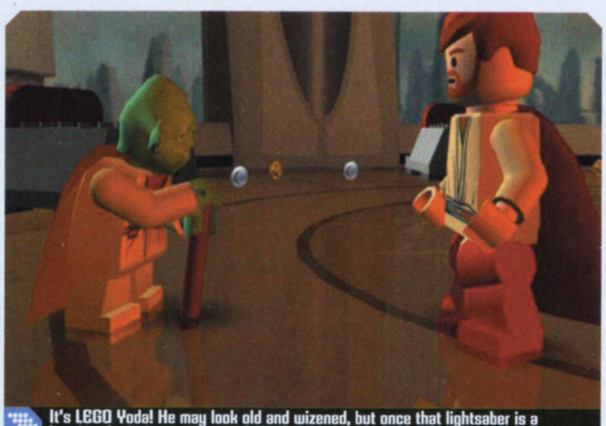
The game features all three *Star Wars* prequels, so there's lots of bang for your buck. We may even get some teaser info from the upcoming *Revenge of the Sith* via LEGO Machinima!

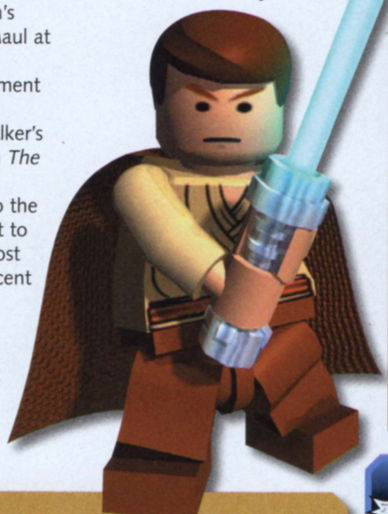
Use the force to ruthlessly scatter your enemies apart into piles of bricks from a certain famous toy manufacturer.

Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan's classic battle with Darth Maul at the end of *The Phantom Menace* is a stand out moment in the game so far, closely followed by Anakin Skywalker's pod race on Tatooine from *The Phantom Menace*. The faithfulness of the game to the movies also means you get to experience some of the most hair-raising moments in recent *Star Wars* history, like the droid onslaught in the Genosian arena.

With some of the most uniquely cool visuals we've ever locked jedi-eyes upon *LEGO Star Wars* is looking like it'll be a galaxy-sized hit.

Rob Taylor GM

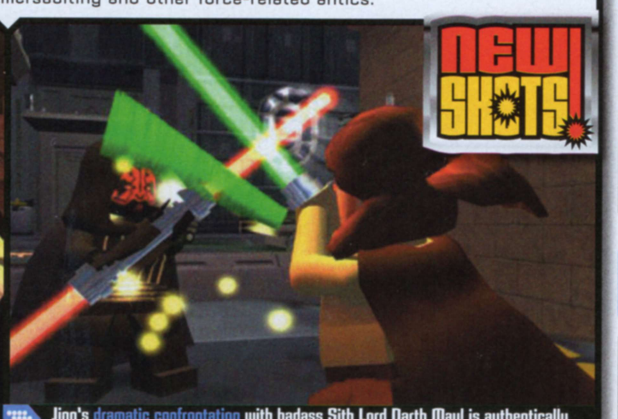

It's LEGO Yoda! He may look old and wizened, but once that lightsaber is a buzzing the little green guy is lethal!



WHAT A KNIGHT

What we've played of the game so far chiefly revolved around the exploits of Jedi heroes Kenobi and Jinn at the beginning of *Episode I: The Phantom Menace*. Cue lots of lightsaber action, somersaulting and other force-related antics.

Much of the game's comedy relief comes from hapless young apprentice Obi-Wan and his disapproving Jedi tutor Qui-Gon.



Jinn's dramatic confrontation with badass Sith Lord Darth Maul is authentically recreated in true LEGO fashion.

Need to know

What is it?

LEGO and *Star Wars* are the two of the most brilliant things in the world. Put them together and you get one of the most anticipated releases of 2005.

Facts

- More than 30 playable *Star Wars* characters to unlock
- Use the Force to solve puzzles and toy with feeble enemies
- Fly Naboo fighters, pod racers, speeder bikes and top-secret vehicles from *Revenge of the Sith*

Rumour

- There wasn't enough LEGO for Jabba.

From the people who made...

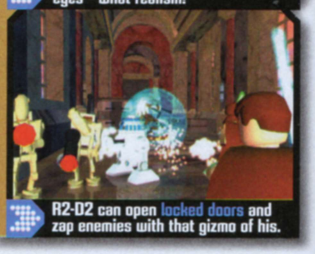
Haven: Call of the King 67%
Finding Nemo 58%

FREE ME!

Perhaps the most exciting aspect to *LEGO Star Wars* is the Free-play mode. As you encounter new allies and enemies in the game they're unlocked and placed in the Free-mode roster. Imagine revisiting levels as the likes of Chewie, Yoda, Darth Maul or Count Dooku and using their unique abilities to discover secret areas. The only downside is that Jar Jar Binks is also playable. Still, you can always kill him.

Forget the wimpy Jedi - the Dark Side rules and red lightsabers rock.

Dooku's even got the bags under his eyes - what realism!


R2-D2 can open locked doors and zap enemies with that gizmo of his.

VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ LEGO Yoda!
+ LEGO Chewbacca!
+ LEGO R2-D2!

GM HATES
- LEGO levels can look a bit spartan at times
- There's fair wad of backtracking

MOST WANTED METER

With *Leia* upon *Leia* of brilliance, *LEGO Star Wars* has forced its way into our affections. *Ewoked!*

5 4 3 2 1

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ...LEGO Island 2: The Brickster's Revenge, 75%
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...Jedi Knight 2: Jedi Outcast, 93%

In the sky, there is only one rule: hunt or be hunted.
Ace Combat™ Squadron Leader.

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FUN,
ANYONE?
PlayStation 2

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- OUT: MARCH
- FORMAT: XB
- PRICE: £39.99
- DEVELOPER: DIGITAL EXTREMES
- PUBLISHER: HIP INTERACTIVE
- ONLINE: CO-OP, DEATHMATCH, CTF
- OTHER FORMATS: PC
- CALL: 020 780 870 97
- PLAYERS: 1-4

CHECK OUT MY WEAPON...

Pariah is choc full of upgradeable weapons, and uses a three-tier upgrade system...

The grenade launcher is not an ideal close-quarters weapon.

Mason dons goggles before he lets fly with a burst of plasma.

Bulldog sounds a lot cooler than 'bog standard machine gun'.

The guy who exploded didn't appreciate the cool-looking effects...

ALL THE TRIMMINGS

From a two-seated buggy with a chaingun to the three-wheeled Wasp, *Pariah*'s transport shouts "drive me"!

This beast makes *Halo*'s warthog look like a Skoda, don't you think?

Cross a tractor with a Reliant Robin and you get this...

With gear this cool, the future can't come soon enough. Wonder if it's a Ford?

BRING A FRIEND

Pariah's multi-player is simply to die for, with Frontline assault, CTF, Playground and Deathmatch modes. Mmm...

Thunderbirds are go! Whoops, we got the wrong game.

NEW SHOTS

Make rude-looking lumps on screen with the map editor.

Preview your masterpieces and get your mates over for a thumping.

PARIAH

One pariah you don't want to avoid...

Are you one of the many gamers affected by post-*Halo 2*-itis, a virus that has left your world seemingly empty and cruel? Well, lament no longer 'cause Doctor Jack Mason has arrived to give you a shot in the arm!

In *Pariah*'s distant future of 2520, Mason is transporting virus-ridden fitster Karina across the galaxy when his craft goes down in flames. Stranded on earth (now a prison planet), the duo are hunted by evil authorities. As the infection spreads, some startling side effects begin to occur...

Mason may not have Master Chief's cool appeal, but in gorgeous Karina he has quite the sidekick. Within minutes of playing *Pariah*, we were struck by its classy production values. This means decent voice acting and a slick, if not gripping, plot. Jack and Karina's journey takes them around a range of environs, from dark forests to futuristic trains and an ominous building called the Anvil. Unfortunately, *Pariah* doesn't appear to have quite as much scope for exploration as *Halo*.

TAKE A HIKE

Visually, the game is looking tasty, with detailed character and vehicles models, a rudimentary physics engine and the odd bit of destructible terrain. Weapon and environmental effects are similarly scrumptious, notably the best in-game H2° since *Far Cry*. *Pariah*'s sounding swell, too – we shivered as desolate winds swept the barren planet while we had our arses kicked.

Although far from revolutionary, *Pariah* is no shrinking violet when it comes to innovation. Medic Mason injects himself with a Star Trek-esque gadget instead of relying on health pack methods, and there are also Weapon Energy Cores to be found that let you customise your sidearm.

So it plays and looks the business, the weapons are suitably meaty and the multi-player is astounding. With promised boss fights and viral superpowers on the way, *Pariah* is looking like a safe bet to more than dull the pain until *Halo 3* arrives. GM

STARRING
Foxy sidekick Karina.

The water effects are so good we tried to dive into our monitors.

Need to know

What is it?

One of the most highly anticipated first-person shooters of 2005, *Pariah* simply screamed '*Halo*' at us from the word go.

Facts

- Customise your arsenal with any Weapon Energy Cores you find
- Runs on a modified Unreal Engine and uses Havoc physics
- Glossy script penned by Hollywood 'professionals'.
- There's vehicles! Six of them, in fact

Rumour

- Eastenders' Doctor Legg appears.

From the people who made...

Unreal 84%
Unreal Tournament 94%

HANDS ON VERDICT

PARIAH

HOW FINISHED? 20%

PREVIEWER: Rob Taylor

CONTROLS

- A - JUMP
- B - RUN
- Y - WEAPON WHEEL
- X - RELOAD/USE/VEHICLE
- ⬅ - CROUCH
- ➡ - ZOOM
- L - BLADE SLICE
- R - SHOOT

WE PLAYED IT AT...

Hip Interactive's office

WHAT WE PLAYED

- Eight missions
- Deathmatch
- Map Editor
- Multi-player

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

We're sorry to keep saying this, but just like *Halo*! From the visuals and control scheme down to the vehicles, *Pariah* is shaping up to be a worthy homage to Bungie's seminal shooter. If we're being truly honest, though, the multi-player is what we're *really* gagging for.

ANY PROBLEMS?

The enemy AI was unreliable, and the code we played was riddled with slowdown.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Upgrading our sniper rifle with a heat sensitive scope to slaughter long distance enemies.

VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ The Mad Max-esque vehicles
+ A spot-on map editor.

GM HATES
- Getting shot up when injecting our healing serum. Grr
- It's not quite *Halo*

5 4 3 2 1

MOST WANTED METER

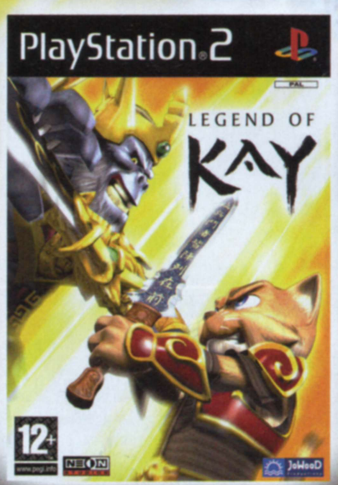
More than just a *Halo* rip-off, *Pariah* is looking genuinely promising. The first great FPS of 2005?

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ...Halo 2, (XB)
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...Halo 2
OUT SOONER: ...Project Snowblind, February

WAY OF THE FELINE

LEGEND OF KAY



JoWooD Productions
www.jowood.com

NEON STUDIOS

PlayStation.2

www.legendofkay.com

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PlayStation 2

XBOX

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• OUT: 18TH MARCH • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99
• DEVELOPER: SONY • PUBLISHER: SONY • ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: EYETOY COMPATIBLE
• OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEBSITE: WWW.UK.PLAYSTATION.COM • PLAYERS: 1-4

EYE TOY: MONKEY MANIA

Act the monkey quite literally in Sony's latest EyeToy outing...

EYE WIN

Monkey Mania's best mini-games are the ones where you play simultaneously with other players, battling it out to hit monkeys, catch monkeys, feed bananas to monkeys... you get the idea. In the games where you play on your own, you win monkeys by winning the game and lose them to other players if you mess up. Simple!

Playing side by side, all you have to worry about is hitting one another.

Single-player games test things such as your banana chopping skills.

You can't fail to smile at a mischievous monkey. It's undeniably endearing the way they swing from the branches of trees, cackling away to themselves, occasionally pausing to throw their own faeces at other monkeys.

Sony's latest Eye Toy game isn't the first game to exploit our not-so-distant relatives. They're everywhere from *Super Monkey Ball* to *TimeSplitters* and *Ape Escape*. The latter is a game developed by the same studio as *Monkey Mania*; they're obviously particularly fond of hairy half-humans.

MONKEY MAGIC

Similarly to *Mario Party*, this is primarily a board game that up to four people can play. Taking turns to spin a roulette wheel, players move around the board trying to dodge penalty squares, compete in mini-games and collect monkeys. Also similarly to *Mario Party*, the moving around a board game part is the duller bit at the moment. Trudging around the game board for several goes, with no one landing on a mini-game square, feels less like a game and more like mental monkey torture. The 50 mini-games are where the fun is at – from chopping bananas to guiding snowballs down mountains, there's plenty of variety. Fortunately, you can choose to just play mini-games and skip the board game bit, but currently only after you've unlocked them by playing the board game.

At preview stage the game feels a bit slow and sluggish, with the buttons taking a long time to react to you waving over them. But with a few improvements, *Monkey Mania* should be yet another worthy EyeToy game.

Kath Brice GM

Need to know

What is it?

The latest EyeToy game from Sony that features a *Mario Party* style board game, loads of EyeToy mini-games and a whole bunch of monkeys.

Facts

- It features 50 EyeToy mini-games that can be played either as part of the board game or on their own.
- Some of the games are played with more than one person simultaneously waving their arms around like a fool.
- Your goal is to collect monkeys and stop other players nicking them!

From the people who made...

Ape Escape 2 ..... 74%
EyeToy: Groove 70%

Travelling around the board is simple - it's made a bit more interesting with collectable items that you can use against other players.

VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Monkeys - and lots of them
+ The large amount of mini-games

GM HATES
- None of the games we played are up to the quality of *EyeToy: Play 2*'s

MOST WANTED METER

It's no *EyeToy: Play 2*. But there are a lot of games, and some tweaks to speed up the board game part could make this a good group game.

5 4 3 2 1

• OUT: MARCH • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £29.99 • DEVELOPER: KUJU • PUBLISHER: OXYGEN INTERACTIVE
• ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: PC, XB • WEBSITE: WWW.OXYGENINT.COM • PLAYERS: 1

CONSPIRACY: WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Look no further for elusive weapons of mass destruction...

Reading the latest all formats release schedule you'd be forgiven for thinking the world's gone terrorist mad at the moment. *America's Ten Most Wanted*, *Conflict: Global Terror* and now *Conspiracy: Weapons of Mass Destruction*. They're obsessed.

Conspiracy is a first-person shooter that uses the engine of 2003's above average *Warhammer 40,000: Fire Warrior game*. You play as ex-government secret service agent Cole Justice, hired to infiltrate a rogue government agency called Hydra who have been developing weapons of mass destruction to sell to terrorists.

Right from the start *Conspiracy* is more challenging than your average FPS. It chucks you into an area laden with traps and explosives, and things only get tougher as you go.

TERROR-IFIC

There are five different environments, spanning interiors and exteriors, and a host of guns to collect. You can only carry two guns at a time, though, and have to choose *Halo*-style what you want to drop and what to keep. Stupidly tough though it is, the difficulty level isn't the biggest thing that looks set to hinder *Conspiracy*. The extremely basic visuals, sound and enemy AI hardly make it stand out for the right reasons next to the likes of *Killzone*. Still, as a straightforward blast at a reasonable price, *Conspiracy* might just fit the bill.

Kath Brice GM

Need to know

What is it?

A pretty dated looking first-person shooter from Oxygen Interactive based on the *Fire Warrior* engine, that features big weapons, dumb enemies and a lot of blasting through levels. Good for anyone who fancies a challenge; at present it's rock hard.

Facts

- Five totally different environments that range from Aztec ruins to military training camps
- An array of weapons from assault rifles to sub machine guns and sniper rifles
- Two methods of play - single-player story mode and survival mode where you just blast people into oblivion

Rumour

It's impossible to complete on 'hard'.

From the people who made...

Pireblade 76%
Reign Of Fire 61%
Pire Warrior 78%

VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Running and gunning is good, mindless fun
+ Rocket launchers pack a suitably violent punch

GM HATES
- The identikit enemies with as much intelligence as Jordan after a frontal lobotomy

MOST WANTED METER

It's not the most accomplished PPS you'll see this year, nor the prettiest. But the *Fire Warrior* engine is solid and shooting enemies is a blast.

5 4 3 2 1

BRAIN DEAD

The enemies might be fairly dumb but there is some variety among the shooting. Setting off alarms means you'll be swamped with bad guys quicker than you can whip out your pistol, so stealth is often the way to go if possible.

If you haven't found the security pass it's a good time to line up a headshot.

There's no penalty for shooting innocent scientists, but you may need their help later.

The opening levels feature all sorts of trip wires that you're best off not plonking your size 10s on.

OUT: 11TH MARCH • FORMAT: PC • PRICE: £19.99 • DEVELOPER: EA • PUBLISHER: EA
ONLINE: DOWNLOADS • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • CALL: 01932 450000 • PLAYERS: 1

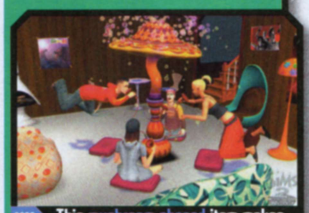
PCCD

THE SIMS 2 UNIVERSITY

University *Sims*-style: student life at its most bizarre...

PARTY ON

University has lots of unique new items and interactions. One aspiration reward includes a giant plant. If you forgot to feed it, it's likely to eat one of your Sims. Another Sim could drink the elixir that was produced afterwards to gain eternal life, though. Don't worry about the dead Sim either. It's possible to bring them back to life...



This mushroom-shaped item makes your Sims seem very giggly...

Unlike this one, you can have more clean-cut sports parties if you like.

Now that Sims can age in *The Sims 2* it makes perfect sense that EA have chosen for their first expansion pack something they could never have done before. *The Sims 2 University* lets you send your teenage Sims off to university so they can party every night, sleep all day and get a decent education.

Unlike previous expansions, *University* is the first to feature proper NPCs. The student dorms your Sim starts off staying in can house up to 30 students and you can't take *direct* control of them.

SIM-PLE LIFE

Instead, your Sims have an influence bar. Once you start to fill it up by building relationships, you can influence non-playable Sims to do things, such as your coursework. Yes, while you might think nerdy Sims will fare better at uni, socially-driven ones can do just as well by cheating and influencing tutors. And, of course, all the university mayhem you can think of is in there for all to enjoy – frat parties, practical jokes and so on. There's also plenty of mad stuff you might not remember from uni that only *The Sims* can do. Your ultimate goal? To graduate from uni and be able to take advantage of the four new career paths the expansion pack offers. And to try not and let it take over *your* life – again – for too long.

Kath Brice GM

Having parties won't help your grades, but will get you influence.

Need to know

What is it?

The first expansion pack for *The Sims 2*, *University* lets you send your teenage Sims off to uni where they can live the student life.

Facts

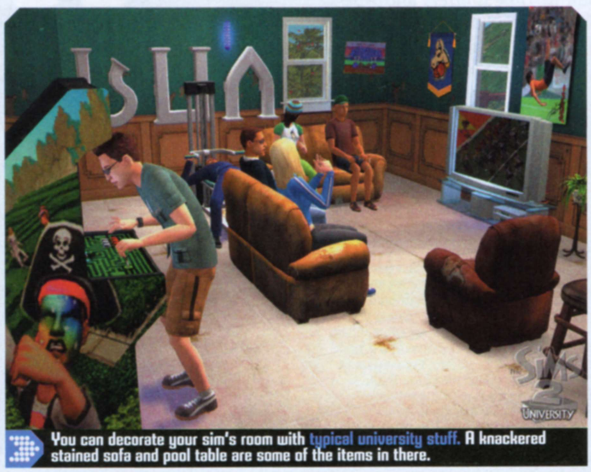
- New building tools allow you to create your own university or move into one of three pre-made ones
- You'll be able to take Sims and move them into halls together at university
- Extras include more aspiration slots to fulfil and one big lifetime goal to strive for

Rumour

- Your Sim could catch meningitis.

From the people who made...

The Sims Bustin' Out	70%
The Sims: Bustin' Out (GBA)	82%
The Sims 2	91%



You can decorate your sim's room with typical university stuff. A knackered stained sofa and pool table are some of the items in there.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ It's packed full of typical *Sims* humour
+ You can build your own university

GM HATES
- This game could spell the end of our social life until we give all our Sim students botulism

MOST WANTED METER

This is looking every bit as good as you'd expect. The gameplay features subtle differences to the norm, which should get you hooked all over again.

8 9 2 1

OUT: 4TH MARCH • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99
DEVELOPER: DARKWORKS • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT • ONLINE: NO
OTHER FORMATS: XB, PC • CONTACT: 01932 838230 • PLAYERS: 1

PS2 XBOX PCCD

COLD FEAR

Could this be a *Resident Evil 4*-killer?

Shiver me timbers – a survival horror game set at sea! Whatever will they think of next?

In *Cold Fear* you fill the shoes of Tom Hansen, US Coast Guard crewman extraordinaire. Sent to investigate a seemingly abandoned Russian whaling vessel, his unfortunate team discover something terrible lurking beneath those bloodstained decks. And Tom and his crew are going to have to kill it before it kills them.

Kind to dolphins, but not an ounce of compassion for the human race.

Sailing isn't all GPS systems and Helly Hansen coats you know.

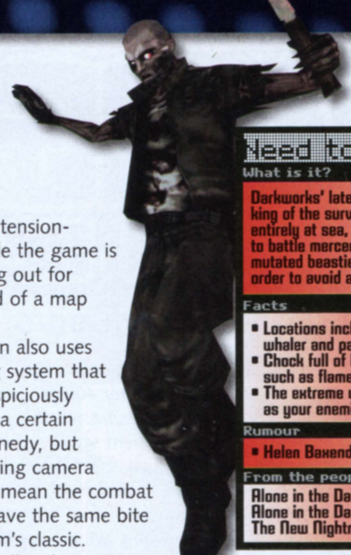
Okay, so the story's not blindingly original but *Cold Fear* is bubbling along quite nicely, with some of the best weather and environmental effects we've seen in a long time. You can almost taste the salty sea air as the whaler is pounded by wave after gigantic wave. Unfortunately, while this idea is wonderfully fleshed out in some parts (luring dopey mutants to their doom is fun) it'll also annoy you when Tom has to circumnavigate the deck just because he can't climb over a few crates. The big lump.

As you'd expect, *Cold Fear* is chock full of scary moments. Having the lights fail on us in a particularly scary storeroom and the old 'headless body in the closet' trick both instantly spring to mind. However, there are a few issues that need refining before we start touting this as genuine competition for *Resi 4*. For a start, loading times are a complete tension-killer, while the game is also crying out for some kind of a map system.

Hansen also uses an aiming system that seems suspiciously similar to a certain Leon Kennedy, but some glaring camera problems mean the combat doesn't have the same bite as Capcom's classic.

Hopefully when it's released these issues will be resolved, and we'll be able to appreciate *Cold Fear* as an excellent new addition to the genre.

Rob Taylor GM



Need to know

What is it?

Darkworks' latest attempt to become king of the survival horror genre. Set entirely at sea, hero Tom Hansen has to battle mercenaries, genetically mutated beasties and Mother Nature in order to avoid a watery grave.

Facts

- Locations include a mysterious ocean whaler and parasite-infested oil rig
- Chock full of hardcore weaponry such as flamethrowers
- The extreme weather is as dangerous as your enemies

Rumour

- Helen Baxendale's the voice of Anna.

From the people who made...

Alone in the Dark	88%
Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare	80%

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Feeling seasick thanks to the atmospheric environment
+ The 'jumpy' moments

GM HATES
- Some major camera issues to be resolved
- We need a map, damn it!!!

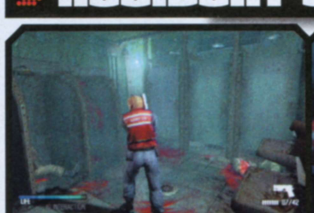
MOST WANTED METER

Cold Fear is cheesy schlock horror at its finest, but not enough to have *Resident Evil 4* shaking in its blood-splattered boots.

6 9 2 1

RESIDENT COLD FEAR

Cold Fear gives a nod in the direction of the *Resident Evil* series on numerous occasions, but we're hardly complaining.



These bogs are furnished with claret. Constipation can be a terrible thing.

Finding diaries next to corpses helps Tom piece together the mystery.

When will those mad scientists learn to stop meddling with genetics?

Leon Kennedy tries his new over the shoulder aiming system...

PlayStation 2

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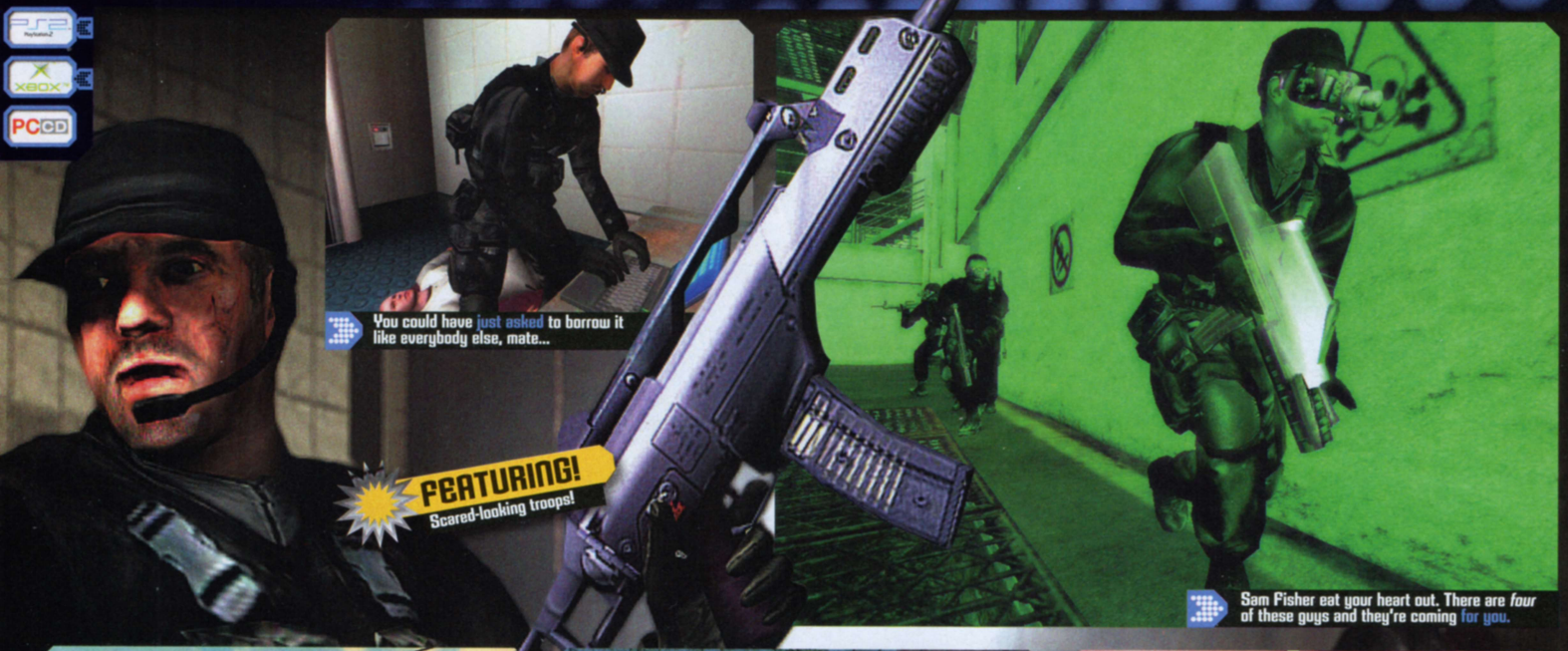
PREVIEW

OUT: SEPTEMBER • **FORMAT:** PS2, XB • **PRICE:** £39.99
DEVELOPER: PIVOTAL • **PUBLISHER:** SCI • **ONLINE:** TO BE REVEALED...
OTHER FORMATS: PC • **CONTACT:** 020 7585 3308 • **PLAYERS:** 1-2

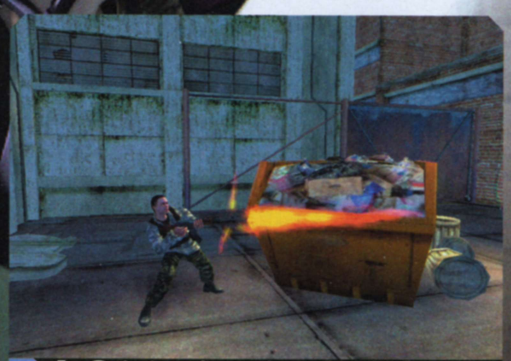


You could have just asked to borrow it like everybody else, mate...

FEATURING!
Scared-looking troops!

Sam Fisher eat your heart out. There are *four* of these guys and they're coming for you.

Foley looks calm enough here, but he's only a mission away from going unexpectedly AWOL.



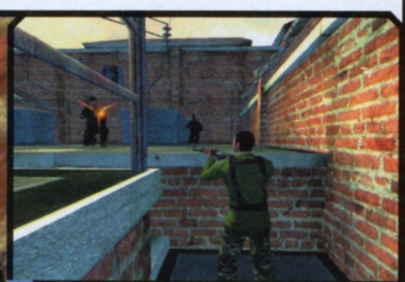
Tony Martinovic wasn't one to shy away from taking home security into his own hands.

There's gore splattered all over the walls and no home furnishings in sight. This can only be Russia.

ON THE FLIP SIDE

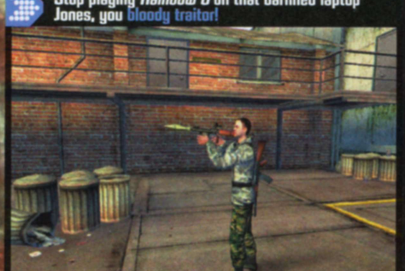
The freeform nature of the new levels in *Global Terror* means there's some serious environmental interaction on offer, and we're not talking Greenpeace here. Bradley and his outfit will vault over railings, jump down staircases and slide down ladders in true SWAT team style as they carry the fight to the terrorist scum. It also helps immerse you in the auction, because an elite team who can't get around without looking like a bunch of decrepid pensioners aren't likely to last very long.

Enhanced rag-doll physics mean you can literally blow enemies off buildings, then watch them make a realistic 'plop' onto the ground below.



Why stroll down the stairs when you can simply launch yourself off them instead?

Stop playing *Rainbow 6* on that damned laptop Jones, you bloody traitor!



If you're tired of interaction, simply try to blow levels up if the mood takes you.

CONFLICT: GLOBAL TERROR

It's terrorism this time, folks, but there's no Bin Laden in sight...

The *Conflict* series, or *Rainbow Six*-lite as *GM* affectionately refers to it, has become something of a gaming institution. After the phenomenally successful *Desert Storm 1* and *2*, Pivotal dropped the grenade somewhat as gamers got lost in the claustrophobic jungles of Vietnam. Thankfully *Global Terror* is shaping up to be a timely return to form.

You put the gun down. No, *you* put the gun down! No, *you*...

This new terror truly is global, and during the game the lads (and fit new female recruit Sherman) visit more countries than Judith Chalmers. One minute they'll be protecting a US diplomat on the neon-lit streets of Seoul, the next they're rescuing his daughter from the jungles of South Korea. Then it's off to investigate the origins of a dirty bomb in a Chernobyl-esque reactor in the Ukraine, rush a terrorist camp in North Africa or even brave a snowstorm in Kashmir. Better remember that passport, then.

AIMING HIGH

Pivotal were keen to stress that they'd learned from criticism directed towards the painfully linear *Conflict: Vietnam*, so *Global Terror* harks back to the expansive levels and multiple routes we remember so fondly from *Desert Storm*.

In a brave but risky move, Pivotal have risked the wrath of *Conflict* fans by removing auto-aim from *Global Terror*, a decision that radically alters the flow of the game. Instead of a gun-'em-down, Rambo-style fest of slaughter, deploying your squad properly takes on more importance than ever before.

Assisted aim remains, though, and the game avoids strict realism – your team can take unholy amounts of punishment, and get knocked unconscious rather than dying.

PUNCH UP

Global Terror is a visual treat, and we watched with open mouths as bullets peppered a pillar, coughing up dust and blowing chunks of concrete everywhere. Pivotal were also keen to show off their in-house physics, responsible for some mighty fine rag-doll animations and weapon recoil effects. The team have also found room for tons of speech, promising Hollywood voice talent and a full orchestral soundtrack.

But it was *Global Terror*'s new AI that really made our trip worthwhile. Enemies now find cover whenever possible, and we're not just talking buildings – these crafty sods used pillars and trees as well. Gone are the days of running in all guns blazing.

We're happy to report that *Conflict: Global Terror* looks to be packing more punch than a kilo of C4, and this is one time we're actually happy to hear the words "global terror" and "September" in the same sentence. Phew.

Rob Taylor GM

"DEPLOYING YOUR SQUAD TAKES ON MORE IMPORTANCE THAN EVER"

Need to know

What is it?

The fourth in Pivotal's popular *Conflict* saga is a unique mix of *Mercenaries* and *Rainbow Six*. Old favourite Bradley and his team return to save the day by completing a range of mission-based objectives while piling up a body count that makes WW2 seem like a harmless bout of fisticuffs.

Facts

- **Go in with all guns blazing or simply take the lights out and knife your way through.**
- **Play in first or third person while weaving your way though multiple-route missions.**
- **Features state-of-the-art weaponry and equipment including night and thermal vision goggles.**

Rumour

Weapons of mass destruction are rumoured to have been discovered in Pivotal's Bath studios.

From the people who made...

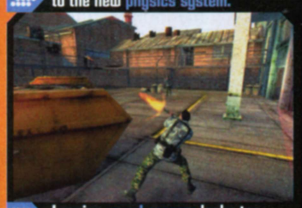
Conflict: Desert Storm 2:.....85%
Conflict: Vietnam:.....86%

EYE EYE

The superb new game engine is sure-fire proof that Pivotal have achieved Jedi-like levels of mastery over Xbox and PS2 hardware. Characters and weaponry drip with detail, and even on PS2 textures are looking miraculously sharp and detailed.

Jones looks like a new man – literally. Check the weapon detail!

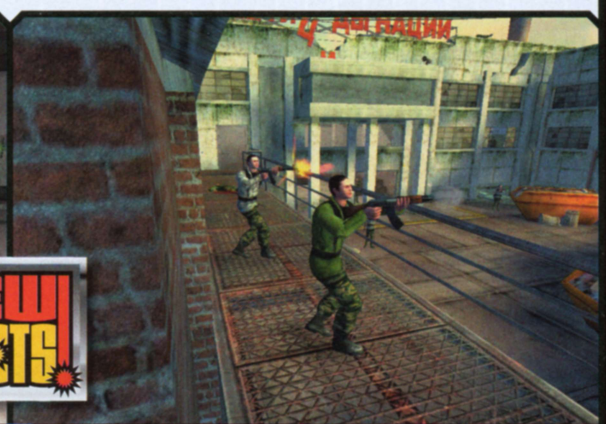
Bradley's backpack jangles thanks to the new physics system.



Leaning round corners looks top-notch and improves the gameplay.

OSAMA BANNED LADEN

Despite the game boasting a title that'll get the PC brigade choking on their quiche, Pivotal are actually keen to distance their effort from the antics of Al Qaeda. As such, the baddies in *Global Terror* are simply a figment of a twisted imagination.

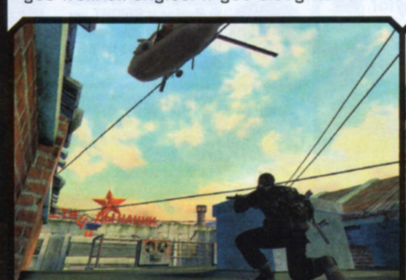


Tasty new female recruit Sherman joins anti-terrorist toughies Bradley, Connors and Jones. She's just as tough and deadly as they are.

The bad guys are March 33, yet another shadowy consortium bent on destabilising the world, though we're not sure exactly why.

MAGIC MOMENTS

Thankfully, *Global Terror* is full to bursting with those unforgettable Conflict set pieces, with legions of heavily armoured tanks, psychotic grunts and deadly choppers to blast into oblivion. Enemies abseil down from guideropes, flank you and generally assault you from all angles. If you slaughter oodles of enemies in one spot, they'll even find a different route to attack from.



Execs worried the Ukrainian spin-off of *Budgie the Little Helicopter* took realism one step too far.

The excessive weight of the rocket launcher finally forced Connors to rest his weary thighs.

Hey, what's the deal? You get the chain gun and I get a peashooter and a skip to hide in!

VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Flying all over the globe fighting terror!
+ *Conflict*'s legendary Co-op mode.

GM HATES
– A plot even Tom Clancy would find confusing.
– The frankly insane level of difficulty.

MOST WANTED METER

Terror-ific stuff that proves trying to take over the world doesn't necessarily ruin peoples' lives.

5 4 3 2 1

CAN'T WAIT?
MOST LIKE: ...Conflict: Desert Storm 2 85%
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...MGS 3: 95%
OUT SOONER: ...Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 4: Lockdown (March)

■ OUT: 4TH MARCH ■ FORMAT: PC ■ PRICE: £34.99 ■ DEVELOPER: EUGEN SYSTEMS ■ PUBLISHER: ATARI
■ ONLINE: SKIRMISH ■ OTHER FORMATS: NONE ■ CONTACT: 020 8222 9700 ■ PLAYERS: 1-8

PCCD

ACT OF WAR: DIRECT ACTION

Move over *Rome*, there's a new Real Time Shooter in town...

STORM IT

Act of War's Operations mode begins with a good old-fashioned raid on a secret enemy camp. It's a delicate mission, so you'll have to tread extremely carefully... Kidding! To help US marine Jefferson and his boys capture the wanted heretic Hazim, you just need to fly in and drop some bombs. Big ones.

Approach the base in a covert fashion and engage the enemy.

Locate the troublemaker Hazim and take care of his bodyguards.

What do you get if you cross the plot of *Splinter Cell* with the realistic locations of *The Getaway*, and gameplay nicked from the *Command & Conquer* series? You guessed it – the nuketastic *Act of War*.

The game features three playable factions – the good guys (army/marines, Task Force Talon) and the bad guys (the sinister Consortium). As befits the techno-thriller nature of the plot, your available fire power is a mixture of bog standard C21 weaponry such as AK-74s and high-tech experimental stuff including thermal camouflage and infantry exo-skeletons. It's up to you to research and develop your own gear.

Perhaps the coolest thing about *Act of War* is the fact that developers Eugen have taken a long hard look at the RTS genre and done something a little bit different with it. The result being that Tom Clancy-alike author Dale Brown's plot is fully fleshed out.

CLASS ACT

Eugen have faithfully recreated some of the West's most famous cities. Washington DC, San Francisco and even good old London feature in the game. All of which look stunning and can be blown up – budding anarchists, rejoice!

We played two missions in the preview code – a desert raid and an urban firefight. Both these missions proved that using cover and the correct tactics are vitally important to the gameplay. We found having to zoom in to micro-manage troops made us really care about our little chappies, too. All in all, *Act of War* is shaping up to be something quite special.

Rob Taylor GM

Need to know

What is it?

An global terrorist threat has emerged that threatens to bring down the West. As Major Jason Richter, your mission is to make sure that doesn't happen!

Facts

- The first big real-time shooter of 2005, penned by Dale Brown
- The most jaw-dropping graphics engine this side of *Rome: Total War*, the lightning effects are ace
- Features a 'human resourcing model' that encourages the safe treatment of non-combatants

Rumour

- Sam Fisher heads The Consortium.

From the people who made...

The Gladiators ..... N/A
Times of Conflict ..... N/A

Sanctioning unnecessarily destructive air strikes on a range of historic sites can be a strangely satisfying experience. We probably need help.

VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ The impressive level of realism
+ The plot looks to be a real good 'un

GM HATES
- The Consortium are only playable in Skirmish mode
- The cheap and cheerful B-movie presentation

MOST WANTED METER

Here at *GM* we're partial to a bit of RTS action, and if *Act of War* is anything to go by, 2005 might be starting with an atomic-sized boom.

GM 92%

■ OUT: TBC ■ FORMATS: PS2 ■ PRICE: £39.99 ■ DEVELOPER: KONAMI
■ PUBLISHER: KCES PLAYMORE ■ ONLINE: NO ■ OTHER FORMATS: NONE ■ CONTACT: 020 8987 5730 ■ PLAYERS: 1-2

PS2

ENTHUSIA PROFESSIONAL

Sounds like a Peter Andre song, but how does it play?

Konami has roared into the intimidating arena of PS2 driving simulators with *Enthusia*, a game gunning **straight for *Gran Turismo*. And if they made racers half as well as they make footy games, we would be in for a treat.**

NFS Underground and *Burnout* fans look away now, 'cause *Enthusia* is geared towards the purist. It's undeniably varied – so far we've raced a Le Mans Toyota GT-One on a speed ring, a Range Rover Vogue through the desert and an Aston Martin Vanquish through rural Germany. Not to mention a SMART car around urban Italy at night and a Merc SLR around the Nürburgring. And that's just for starters...

So, on the surface at least, everything seems rosy. *Enthusia*, if nothing else, is something of a feast for the eyes. The vast range of cars and the environments you'll race them in look uniformly great. All this variety gives Konami a chance to show off the adaptability of their much-vaunted Visual Gravity System, which allegedly recreates the kind of G-forces high-speed driving accumulates.

WHEELIE DULL

The much-touted handling may well be innovative, but fun it is most definitely not. *Enthusia* plays like a cranky old driving instructor, punishing you for less than perfect driving. It's sluggish, thrill-free, and there's never any feeling of speed. If we wanted to be bored and frustrated we'd be playing Accountancy simulators, not racers.

It's always cool to drive your own car in a racer. Here's my Mini!

To be honest it's not looking particularly promising and Sony will be cackling with delight. With a bit of fine-tuning, Konami can still redeem *Enthusia* and transform it into a genuine *GT4* challenger, but at the mo we'd sooner buy our motor from *Only Fools and Horses*' Boycie.

Rob Taylor GM

Need to know

What is it?

Konami's foray into the racing sim genre and a potential *Gran Turismo*-killer is notable for its ultra serious approach and commitment to realism.

Facts

- Pioneers the 'Visual Gravity System', which Konami claim will allow gamers to experience the G-Forces exerted by high-speed racing
- A non-linear throttle allows players total control over acceleration and deceleration
- Features 40 car manufacturers

Rumour

- An Xbox version is the pipeline.

From the people who made...

Pro Evolution Soccer 4 ..... 95%
Dancing Stage Megamix 78%

Brits abroad: 'I could have sworn Spar was around here somewhere!'

Mind you don't crash while gawping at these waterfalls.

VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Racing a SMART car and a Lotus Elise around the Nürburgring was a dream come true

GM HATES
- The silly name. It sounds more like a 'right to die' sim for professionals

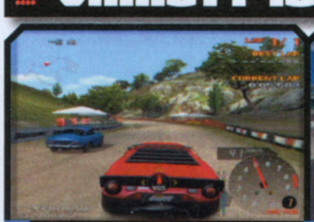
MOST WANTED METER

It looks like a spanking-new Ferrari but handles like a clapped out Citroen. Unfortunately, this is definitely a test drive to forget at the moment.

GM 54%

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE

One area *Enthusia* is certainly *not* lacking is your choice of ride. Take your pick!



Recreate your '70s World Rally Championship fantasies...

Nissan don't just make boring old Micras you know!

Ich bin ein Berliner! Well, somewhere in Germany anyway.

No – it's not Knight Rider, we're driving a Mercedes Benz SLR.

DK
King of Swing
OUT 4TH FEB
GAME BOY ADVANCE SP
SWING THE KING OF SWING
one banana
the Banana
SWINGING SILVER MEDAL 2nd
opposable THUMB
How'd you cook A sausage in The Jungle?*
DANGER: HIGH VELOCITY FALLING KITTEN
Buses Have no fingers So they're rubbish!
Swing Bands are only good at one type of swinging
Swinging GNome has SLIPPY GRIP — OH GNO!!
There can only be One King of Swing.
GOOD SWINGERS
BAD SWINGERS
LEFT and RIGHT BUTTONS ARE DONKEYS GRIPPING MITTS
*GAS MARK 4 35 MINUTES, TURNING occasionally
YETI!!!
Nintendo
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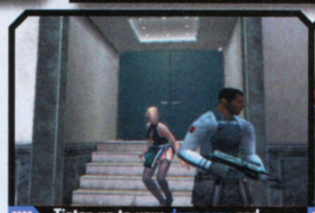
OUT: 11TH MARCH • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: NAMCO • PUBLISHER: SONY
ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • CALL: 0207 859 5000 • PLAYERS: 1

SPINE-TINGLING

Nina's Critical Strike allows you to pinpoint enemies' vitals x-ray style in a sick but slick execution move.


Tiptoe up to your dozy prey and catch them unawares.

Grab the guard with a choke hold by tapping .

You're rewarded with an x-ray view of the damage being inflicted. Snap!

It's likely this poor guy will be off work for quite some time.

NOT JUST A PRETTY FACE

While it's a beat 'em up at heart, *Death by Degrees* has lots of little sub-games to flesh things out. Early on in the game we found ourselves having to protect Nina's mate Alan by sniping off troublesome guards. We then found ourselves waylaid by door puzzles and taking control of a cute little hover camera in order to scope a room out.

Classy Brit agent Alan gives Nina the thumbs up.

Occasionally you'll team up for a Royal Rumble of epic proportions...

Defend your mate from gunmen by picking them off the coward's way.

Use your hover camera to uncover incriminating evidence and/or perv.

Solve the occasional annoyingly obscure puzzle to progress.

DEATH BY DEGREES

Tekken's Nina in a game of her own? Oh yes...

Definitely the fittest *Tekken* girl from an unquestionably fine bunch, Nina Williams (packed with kick-arse attitude) now has her very own game.

Death by Degrees takes place before the now-legendary King of Iron First tournament. Top assassin Nina is currently on a gig for the UK's MI6, infiltrating a luxurious ocean liner.

Nina's cover involves participating in a bare-knuckle tournament taking place in the hull of the ship. But her martial arts prowess quickly raises the suspicions and Nina is duffed up and imprisoned. And so begins *Death by Degrees*...

The game is a weird hybrid of *Metal Gear Solid*, *Dino Crisis* and *Streets of Rage*. You'll mostly be scrapping and sneaking around, but Nina's repertoire of skills are also put to the test during sub-games.

Namco have also decided to reward aesthetically pleasing sluggers, so the slicker your combos, the higher your bonuses. Reach a certain tally and Nina's stats will increase, so approach fights like Jet Li rather than BA Baracus if you want to get ahead in this game.

SUICIDE BLONDE

This far from dumb blonde is not all hands and feet either. We're talking swords, knives and firearms here. That's not to mention Nina's rude-sounding deadly mist attack, included to satisfy rabid *Tekken* fans.

The cinematics in *Death by Degrees* are up there with the best, and although the in-game visuals don't quite match up, they're still impressive. Thankfully, Nina's chest is bouncier than ever and helped distract us from some of the rather basic textures and character models.

Whether you'll get into *Death by Degrees* probably depends on how you react to a control scheme. It takes a little getting used to, but offers an unprecedented degree of control. Even so, us grizzled gaming veterans were soon hankering for a bit of old-skool button mashing.

Promising over 20 hours gameplay and boasting *Tekken* polish and cool appeal in spades, *Death by Degrees* is currently looking sharper than one of Jin Kazama's suits. If Namco can fine tune the fighting so it's a little more on the meaty side, this could be a hit. GM

Need to know

What is it?

Namco's spin-off from the much-loved *Tekken* series, featuring blonde bombshell Nina Williams - a fighter on a mission.

Facts

- Nina's signature *Tekken* moves, including Evil Mist and submission moves
- Features guest appearances by *Tekken* stalwarts Anna Williams and Heihachi
- Revolutionary 360 degree combat system using both analogue sticks

Rumour

- *Tekken*'s Mokujin is Nina's lover.

From the people who made...

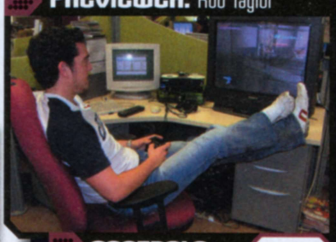
Soul Calibur 2	91%
Time Crisis 3	81%

HANDS ON VERDICT

DEATH BY DEGREES

HOW FINISHED? 35%

PREVIEWER: Rob Taylor



CONTROLS

- ⊗ - OPEN/USE/TALK
- ⊡ - MAP
- L1 - JUMPING STANCE
- R1 - GRAB
- R2 - OVER THE SHOULDER/RUN
- LEFT ANALOGUE - MOVE/BLOCK
- RIGHT ANALOGUE - ATTACK

WE PLAYED IT AT...

GM Towers

WHAT WE PLAYED

- Eight missions
- Deathmatch
- Map Editor
- Multi-player

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Death by Degrees **reminded us of Jet Li's *Rise to Honor*, in that you'll be doing most of Nina's dirty work using the analogue sticks. The left stick controls movement and blocking, the right engages enemies. This 360 degrees control scheme is pretty intuitive.**

ANY PROBLEMS?

The in-game camera is a little erratic, although Namco have time to tweak this before release.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Sneaking up on a guard and wringing their necks like a chicken using the Critical Hit system.

VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Jaw-dropping CGI cutscenes
+ Gawping at Nina's acrobatic cleavage

GM HATES
- Visuals that don't quite live up *Tekken*'s legacy
- The loading times sent us to sleep

MOST WANTED METER 5 4 3 2 1

Boasting a very sexy heroine, innovative gameplay and typical Namco sheen, what more could a gamer ask for?

CAN'T WAIT?
MOST LIKE: ...Rise to Honor (PS2)
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...Metal Gear Solid 3
OUT SOONER: ...The Punisher, February

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* AT SELECTED RETAILERS

NEW HAIRCUT →

OUT Feb 4

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

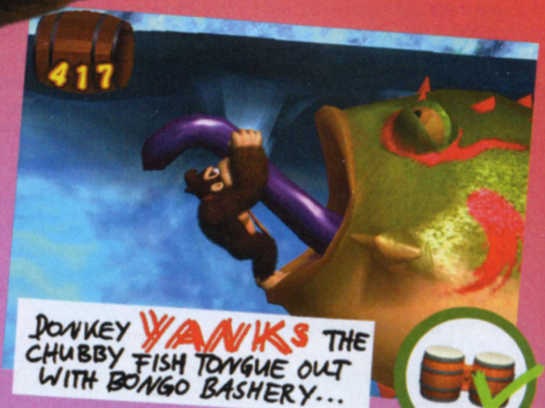
DONKEY KONG JUNGLE BEAT

COMES WITH BONGOS*

SUPER SLAPPY HAPPY SLAPPY

FIRST TESTS PROVE: BONGO CONTROLLED TRUCKS ARE RUBBISH

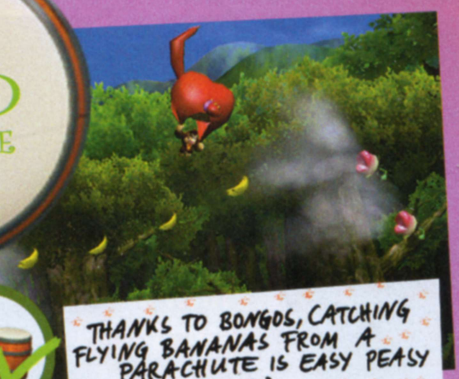
WHO'S A BAD PIGGY



DONKEY YANKS THE CHUBBY FISH TONGUE OUT WITH BONGO BASHERY...

BAD BONGO USE

GOOD BONGO USE



PROVERB SAYS: SHIP LOADED BY BONGO CRANE IS SHIP IN POOP!

THANKS TO BONGOS, CATCHING FLYING BANANAS FROM A PARACHUTE IS EASY PEASY (SEE ABOVE)

GLUE GLUE

CIRCUS WHALE

NEWSFLASH BONGO BELTING BURIES DIGGER

NO KNIFES, PISTOLS, BOMBS, EGGS OR STINKY LETTUCE... JUST BONGOS!

18-7+48=

59

BONGOS

KING OF BALANCE

Nintendo®

.....9 BANANAS.....

World's 1st Bongo Controlled Platform GAME!!

CONTROL STUFF WITH BONGOS

OUT: MARCH • FORMAT: XB • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: EPIC GAMES
PUBLISHER: MIDWAY • ONLINE: MULTI-PLAYER • OTHER FORMATS: NONE
WEB: WWW.LIANDRICONFLICT.COM • PLAYERS: 1-8

UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2: THE LIANDRI CONFLICT

It's all change for *Unreal* – a third-person shooter anyone?

Think of *Unreal* and you'll almost certainly think of a first-person shooter. But now publisher Midway have got their mitts on the franchise it's all change for the beloved FPS.

Need to know

What is it?

Unreal Championship 2 takes the *Unreal* series in a new direction by introducing a third-person viewpoint, beat-'em-up moves and all new powers.

Facts

- You can switch from the first- to third-person viewpoint during play
- Different characters have different attacks, weaponry to choose from and special abilities
- Online tournament matches available on Xbox Live
- Over 40 maps to play

Rumour

- Will star *Mortal Kombat* characters.

From the people who made...

Unreal Tournament 2003 ..... 94%
Unreal Tournament 2004 ..... 87%

For the first time in the *Unreal* series, you play the game primarily from a third-person viewpoint. The reason for this? The game now incorporates a lot of melee fighting and it doesn't just play like a standard first-person shooter. Combatants are now as likely to fight sword to sword as they are snipe one another off. Like a slightly strange sounding *Unreal/Powerstone* hybrid, Epic have done something completely different this time around.

Different vision modes make it easier to home in on opponents.

Which, especially on Xbox where there's no shortage of good online FPSs, seems like a good idea. And it works well. You have the ability to switch from third- to first-person at a button press. For melee attacks, though, you will want to be in third-person.

REALITY CHECK

You can block enemy melee attacks and even projectiles including any type of bullet, returning the lump of lead to its owner with twice as much power behind it. There's a lot of strategy involved in the game – it's not just mindless shooting – and the blocking moves actually make it feel like more of a beat-'em-up at times. Of course, all of the weapons you'd expect to get in *Unreal* are still in the game, alongside the magic swords. Rocket launchers and sniper rifles are there for the taking, but relying on them isn't wise. Mastering the various *Mortal Kombat* style close-up attacks, finishing moves and combos is just as necessary.

And while the game is clearly going to be best played online or with a LAN set-up, you're free to take on bots for a spot of Deathmatch or Capture the Flag. Exactly whether it'll match up to the greatness of the previous games remains to be seen, but it's looking promising. GM

You can choose from various guns before the match begins. Different characers have different weaponry to choose from and unique powers.

At the touch of a button you can switch to melee weapon to fight.

One thing that hasn't been changed is the gore factor. Messy.

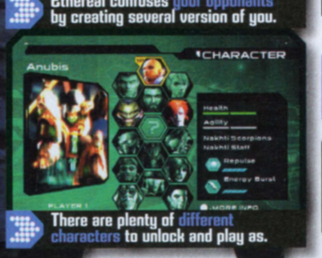
FIGHT CLUB

You choose from various characters before each bout. You then select one explosive and one energy weapon from a standard assortment of Unreal weaponry. Collect adrenaline throughout the game to enables you to use your character's special abilities.

Up close a melee attack is the way to go. Most guns don't compare.

A quick select screen lets you choose a power to use.

Ethereal confuses your opponents by creating several version of you.

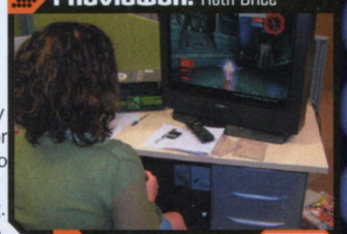


There are plenty of different characters to unlock and play as.

HANDS ON VERDICT

HOW FINISHED? 30%

PREVIEWER: Kath Brice



CONTROLS

- R - PRIMARY FIRE
- L - ALTERNATE FIRE
- Y - SWITCH RANGED WEAPONS
- B - MELEE ATTACK
- X - ADRENALINE MENU
- A - JUMP
- ● - CHANGE VIEW
- ○ - TAUNT

WE PLAYED IT AT...

GM's fight pit

WHAT WE PLAYED

- Tournament
- Four player LAN
- Story campaign
- Online

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

As easy to pick up as any FPS but much deeper that your average one. You've got melee combat to master, adrenaline to collect and defensive moves to learn. All of them use fairly fluid controls and the multi-player in particular is shaping up well.

ANY PROBLEMS?

Visually it's nothing special, especially when you compare it to games such as *Halo 2*.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Cloning several versions of yourself to baffle your enemies, then taking them out with the energy sword.

VERDICT

GM LOVES

+ The frantic-ness of multi-player bouts
+ The wide assortment of characters and weaponry

GM HATES

- The grainy visuals
- Fans of *Unreal* could end up disappointed with what Midway have done

MOST WANTED METER

Epic are creating a completely different style of online shooter, and *Unreal 2* could be the next online shooter to take over your life.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ...Powerstone (DC) 90%
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...TimeSplitters .....Future Perfect, 88%

Yu-Gi-Oh! Original and Chaos Duel Disks, work with the Yu-Gi-Oh! Trading Card game, sold separately.

Available now at Argos TOYS R US WOOLWORTHS

For more information on Yu-Gi-Oh! call Mattel on 01628 500303

MATTEL

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• OUT: APRIL • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £29.99 • DEVELOPER: AM2
• PUBLISHER: SEGA • ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: XB • CALL: 020 8995 3399 • PLAYERS: 1-4

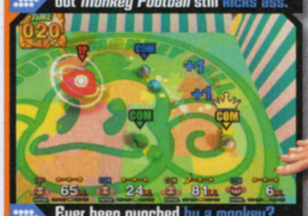
SUPER MONKEY BALL DELUXE

Rollin', rollin', rollin, keep those monkeys rollin'...

MULTIBALL

While the main one-player is moreishly addictive, the true monkey triumphs are the 12 multi-player mini-games that include Monkey Football, Monkey Tennis, Monkey Target, Monkey Bowling and Monkey Bash. Basically anything 'Monkey'. Each game is beautifully simple and makes for *Mario Party* fun, without the Mario.

It may lack some of *Pro Evo*'s style but *Monkey Football* still kicks ass.



Ever been punched by a monkey? Clint Eastwood has, you know...

As Xbox and PS2 owners have waited patiently for a monkey-trapped-in-a-ball puzzle videogame, they are being treated to more spherically simian joy than a sane man could handle. *Super Monkey Ball Deluxe* has an incredible 300 levels to roll through, collect bananas and then hope you've got enough speed up in order to break the finishing tape. It's a veritable marathon of monkey mania!

Tilt platform, roll monkey. Sounds so simple, but so isn't.

For those you yet to champion the chimp, the game is a lot like the *Marble Madness*. Here you tilt the surface the balled monkey is on in order to roll it through a series of obstacles to reach the finish line. Then there's bananas to collect which are cunningly positioned to distract you from your goal.

There's 46 new levels, but we doubt that this will be enough to tempt anyone who's played in on the GameCube to invest in it. It's definitely a worthwhile consideration for any monkey virgin, though.

Dave Harrison GM

Need to know

What is it?

Sega's puzzler spins its way onto the other two consoles. The Deluxe version contains the original *Monkey Ball*, the sequel and some new bits.

Facts

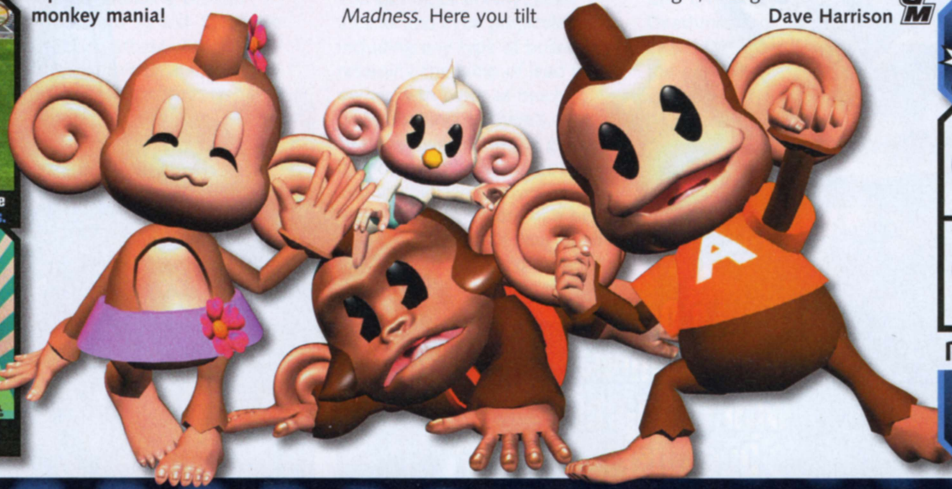
- There's the 114 stages from *Monkey Ball 1*
- 140 from *Monkey Ball 2*
- and another 46 that are exclusive to this Deluxe version
- That's a total of 300 levels! How d'ya like them, erm, levels?

Rumour

New levels are unlockable online.

From the people who made...

Virtua Fighter 4 Evolution.....88%
OutRun 2.....78%



VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ The addictive nature of the game
+ Monkey Golf and Monkey Football

GM HATES
- There's no new mini-games to play
- Losing control of your monkey

MOST WANTED METER

SMB is great, but there's hardly anything new for those who've played it on the GameCube. This is just to placate gamers who won't get a 'Cube.

GM 832

• OUT: APRIL • FORMAT: GC • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: NAMCO • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
• SPECIAL: DOLBY PRO LOGIC II • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.STARFOX.COM • PLAYERS: 1-4

STAR FOX ASSAULT MANAGER

Countryside pest or saviour of the universe? Huum!

What time do you call this, you stumpy little fleabag? We'd almost locked the fox-flap up for good. Here, have a handful of biscuits, Fox. We can't stay mad at you for long. Remember that time when you did that thing on N64? Adorable that was. Go on, do it again – this time on GameCube.

Need to know

What is it?

Classic SNES/N64 icon Fox McCould returns with his gang of freaky friends, making the galaxy safe for everyone. Even wasps.

Facts

- Battle it out in space, in mid-air or on foot
- Split-screen deathmatch fights for up to four players
- Head into battle with three AI-controlled teammates as back-up
- Includes three classic Namco games as a bonus

Rumour

Tekken skins will be unlockable.

From the people who made...

Tekken 4.....92%
Soul Calibur 2.....91%

Nooooooooooo! Here's proof that dippy Slippy does indeed return.

It's been too long since we last saw Fox McCloud and his gang taking to the skies and heavens for some intense space battles. We had *Star Fox Adventures* a few years back, but that wasn't what we wanted: it was a weak, albeit pretty, *Zelda* clone. *Star Fox Assault* puts Fox back into pilot mode, and he streaks his Arwing ship through a number of frantic battles. Much like N64 *Star Fox*, they'll be a mixture of linear assaults through enemy fleets and across planets, and arena-based scraps.

FISTS OF FURY

Your Arwing will be able to barrel roll and change speeds to avoid collisions, and you'll often be called up to save your teammates from danger. It's nothing new, it seems, but as long as they keep it pretty and slick, colour us tickled pink.

Still, if you're only turned on by entirely new things, then the third-person combat sections – where Fox trots about like an action hero, gunning things down before yo-yoing in and out of attack vehicles – should stop you grumbling. This is where the game could easily fall down, if these sections just aren't as tight as the trademark aerial dogfights. Still, we'll happily take that risk just to hear those silly animal voices all over again. Wing-wing-jammin'!

Steve Bailey GM

VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Exciting space combat
+ Piloting vehicles
+ Getting to shoot Slippy

GM HATES
- Slippy the frog. Planker
- On-foot bits could be dodgy
- Namco isn't Nintendo

MOST WANTED METER

We'd love Fox to return to his former glory. This game has all the right ingredients, but now it's down to Namco to nail the recipe...

GM 832

PANDORA'S FOX

Star Fox Assault is, in terms of variety, the most ambitious yet. Fox and co. now get to run about on their back legs like an affront to God...

This boss look suitably Andross-themed. He's Fox's arch-enemy...

Colourful enough to be Panzer Dragoon Orta. Which is a compliment.

A war tank? Mmmmm. Yes, please. We'll take three, thank you.

Third-person shooting is brand new territory for the Fox.

OLD SCHOOL COOL

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Celebrate Sonic's roots in this glorious blast from gaming past. There's 20 high-octane, highly-addictive classics jam packed into one must have compendium of Sonic joy, including:

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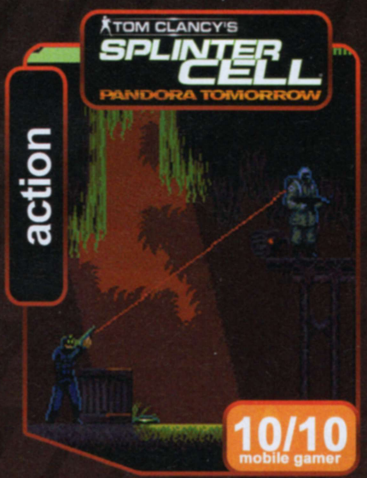

10/10 mobile gamer

arcade

8.5/10 wireless gamer

skating

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www.gameloft.com

GMail

We ♥ Games

Do you love games? You're in the right place. Welcome to the bit of *GM* that's stuffed to bursting point with your mail, game ideas, unreasonable demands – anything that shows how much we♥games. With a capital ♥!

EMAIL US: gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk, subject heading GMail
WRITE TO US: GMail, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath. BA1 2BW.
TEXT US: Send GMAIL then your message to 84070. But keep it short!

RANT! RAVE! HAVE YOUR SAY! SEND US STUFF!

We want everything from fist-shaking rants to letters with little pictures of Pokémon on. And anything in between! Even poetry.

Mad? Bad? Sad? See how each letter writers feeling at a glance! Pleased Happy Ecstatic V. happy Prog Mad Unhappy Curious Sad Disappointed Angry Ranting Surprised Lost it Normal

Pain and Fable

Hi *GM*,

I'd like to express my disappointment for the recent Xbox game, *Fable*. This game had been at the top of my wish list, and I had eagerly sought out development news long before the final name was announced. The game promised everything I dreamt of; character development, innovative fighting and your world moulding around every action move you make.

BAD TATITUDE
Didn't meet everyone's expectations

Imagine my my excitement when I finally got the game and watched in awe as the stunning opening sequences were played. This excitement, however, heavily dropped when I found myself 18 years old after less than an hour of play. Overall, the game was terrible, when compared to what I expected. The fighting was poor, the storyline didn't have me grasped at all, the difficulties of quests were completely wrong (I found the final quest much easier than some sub-quests) and I didn't see any of the features I had been looking forward to most for. As games go, I wouldn't put this any higher than most decent games that don't get hyped. As for Golden Joystick Xbox game of the year, I can think of more suitable winners. I just hope future Lionhead games such as *BC* and *The Movies* live up to their hype

David Williams, Dorset

We stand by our decision that *Fable* is a good game, but we understand your frustration. The head of Lionhead, Peter Molyneux, was promising all kinds of gaming innovation with *Fable* long before the game was half finished. In future perhaps he should put a sock in it until he's 100% sure what his games are capable of.

FANSITE OF THE MONTH

www.pesfan.com
www.pesinsight.com

If you're a *PES* addict and can't stop talking about the growth potential of the reborn Zola, there's a place you can go where this sort of discourse is encouraged. Pesfan.com is ultimate online resource for everything *PES*, the highlight being the forums which are rich with info. The only problem is that it feels a bit 'official', so if you're looking for something more fanzine like check out pesinsight.com – smaller than pesfan but just as informative.

Nintendo

The Last to Know

Hi *GM*,

I'm writing to say that I'm starting to lose my patience with Nintendo and here is why: personally I've always stuck by Nintendo, even when the GameCube was criticised for only being aimed at younger gamers or for being a weak machine with no good games. But the one thing I cannot handle is when Nintendo release a product such as *Pokémon Emerald*, which was released in Japan Sept 2004, and UK gamers didn't get a look in for about eight months. I can understand Nintendo having to create a conversion of the game, but it doesn't stop there. When *Pokémon Fire Red & Leaf* Green were released in the States, US gamers were able to download an Aurora Ticket which allows you to go Bith Island and catch Deoxys, which I thought was great! But it's coming up to four months in the UK, and there's still no sign of Nintendo allowing European gamers a chance of doing the same. Personally I think

TOOOOYYYEEEEE!!!
Games like *Jade Empire* are blurring lines between action and RPG games.

WIN!

If you're the Star Letter writer, you'll win the game of your choice on any format, courtesy of our mates at Britain's top games store – GAME. Get scribbling and you could be a winner!
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STAR LETTER!

The Levellers

Dear *GM*,

Have you noticed how many RPG elements are creeping into mainstream games these days? The most obvious example is the constant levelling up in *GTA*. But also it's starting to make an appearance in *Pro Evolution Soccer*, as you can develop players in Master League by continually levelling up their stats. Then there's all the special moves you can buy in *Spider-Man 2*, and the different styles you can use in *Devil May Cry 3*. It seems there's loads of games that allow you to personalise and develop your character, which used to be RPG features. It's like they ignored the turn-based battle and all the magic stuff and just took out the cool really addictive bit.

Jason Wrathall, Boston

Yes, we have noticed the cross genre blending as the line between action games and RPGs are continually being blurred. *Fable*, *Knights of the Old Republic* and *Jade Empire*.can all clumsily be described as action-RPGs, while the games you mention have strong RPG elements. Konami used to put a whole RPG complete with plot in their old ISS games, so it's obviously something they've been looking at. But whether it's an action game trying to give itself more depth, or an RPG attempting to be more dynamic – it feels great, so long may it continue!

Gmail filter

SPAM

Not everything makes it through *GM*'s expensive filtration software/blcke with the rubber gloves in our company post room. Here's just a random sample...

MOST DISTANT MESSAGE:.....Manila, Philippines (6672 Miles)
MOST INTRIGUING EMAIL HEADING:.....Eleksen Launches Elasticated Wireless Joystick For Mobile Gaming
FUNNIEST ADDRESS PLACE NAME:.....75 Dykesway, Windy Nook
WORST SPELLING OF ANECDOTE:.....'Anicknote' Ben Gant, Shropshire
MOST EXCESSIVE E-MAIL SENDING.....Nicky Wilson sent his e-mail 41 times. We didn't read it.

BEST CHRISTMAS CARD

This one from Rare with Conker making yellow snow

BEST WINNER

Gas works at sunset. Yeah, that's gas works

WORST POSTCARD

Not too sure what they've won though.

NICEST PICTURE

How's this for an addres label. Look! It's a puppy!

NICEST ENVELOPE

Cartoon badgers and hedghogs. How manly.

We Really ♥ Games

Chatting with the people who've taken it all too far...

THIS MONTH: DOUGLAS L., 14, AND A MARIO MADE OF POST-IT NOTES.

GM: That's quite the Post-It mosaic, mister.

Douglas: It's 272 sticky notes and six hours of work.

GM: Why Mario?

Douglas: I love Mario too much. It had to be something from the original *Super Mario Bros.* – either a red or green Mario. Here's an exclusive for you: I'm now working on a mushroom.

GM: How long did it take?

Douglas: I got the supplies in, then started making the mosaic row by row, taping the Post-Its together at the end. About three hours in I was done with the first five rows, so I took a break. Then I continued. Once I finished all the rows, I taped them backwards to the wall, strip by strip.

GM: Can we come round and buy it?

Douglas: It's 5:30 in the morning here in Minnesota. I'm getting ready for school.

Want more? http://shoe.mortgagesbyanna.com/sticky

And here it is in all it's Post-It glory. Six hours well spent if you ask us.

REALLY LOVE GAMES?

Then this could be you! Spent long evenings turning your love of games into something 3D? Send us the pics and you could be featured in the pages of *GM*. I Really ♥ Games, Gamesmaster, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. Everyone featured gets a free game!

Nintendo are a disgrace to the gaming community. And they wonder why the GameCube sales are so poor! Perhaps they should take a look in the mirror!

Lee Burns

We understand your frustration but we really can't see the situation changing, as Europe is the last consideration for Nintendo. As a Japanese company, they're obviously more concerned with their domestic performance, then it's the US next as it's such a huge market, which leaves us lot picking up the scraps. Unfortunately we can't see that changing...

Halo 2: a beautiful game unfortunately played by some really ugly people.

Xbox Livid

Dear *GM*,

As a newcomer to Xbox Live, can I get some things off my chest? Firstly, campers in *Rainbow Six 3: Black Arrow* or *Halo 2*, you're not big or clever. The game is supposed to be fun, so join in instead of being hated by everyone. Secondly, in *PES 4* if you have only got half meg broadband and you are running 10 things at once, do not host and cause lag for everyone you play against. And thirdly, *PES 4* again, if you're getting beaten – take it. Don't be a smacked arse and quit the game to keep your stats up you t***s. Thanks for that *GM*.**

Anthony Hughes, e-mail

Hope that's some relief. If anybody else has an online rant/funny story/almighty winning tip, then please let us know especially as hundreds of abusive gamers have recently been kicked off. Have you been kicked off? Online console gaming is a whole brave new world so let us know what's wrong/right with it.

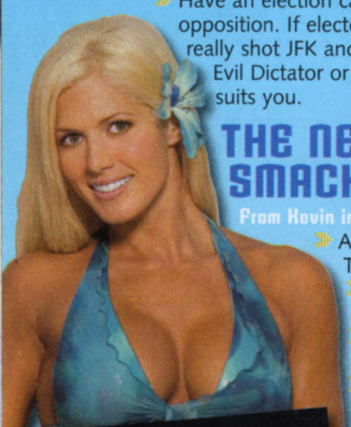
List Of Demands

WE'RE NOT AFRAID TO SAY EXACTLY WHAT WE WANT TO SEE IN OUR GAMES

GTA: San Andreas

Here's some from Daniel Robson, South Shields:

- Kill too many civilians and you'll have to fight side bosses like Godzilla, King Kong and my mother. Eventually you receive bonus powers from the Devil himself.
- Little green men are running amok in your city killing all your would-be victims with laser guns. What do you do?
- Have an election campaign. Kill off your opposition. If elected, visit Area 69, find out who really shot JFK and eventually go to war with an Evil Dictator or the local postman. Whatever suits you.



THE NEXT WWE: SMACKDOWN!

From Kevin in Hilmarnock

- All titles in season mode including Women's Title.
- The season should feature twice as many matches per event.
- Legends should be playable in season as well.
- In 'Create a Stable' any superstar can team with anyone regardless of their attribute points.
- More ring attire unlockables for superstars.
- Instead of Superstar points it should go back to a ranking system. That way there will always be a contender for the title, to get a title match you must be in the top five contenders.
- A storyline featuring a Unification Match but only if you have 10 or more victories counted in the title info menu.

GM's List Of DEMANDS

GM's List for next Pro Evolution Soccer

- Better commentary – we've heard that Ron Atkinson is available
- An online system that punishes people for quitting a game when they're losing
- The ability to put greater curve on the ball
- Five aside mini-game
- A special Roy Carroll move where you pull the ball out the back of the net and pretend it wasn't a goal
- Improved weather effects, perhaps wind could play a bigger role
- Make Stevie Gerrard super-human like he is in real life
- Have it so your defence doesn't automatically make walls for freekicks that are 50 yards away from goal

MAKE YOUR LIST OF DEMANDS!

How would you make the next game in your favourite series better? Simply study computer science at university for three years, learn the C++ programming language and get a job at a top games developer. OR make your List of Demands so game creators have no more excuses for not fitting Lara with a proper support bra or putting monkeys in *GTA 4* right NOW! Send your demands to us at gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk, subject List of Demands or to List of Demands, We♥Games, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. They WILL be made to learn.

MY GAME IDEA

Everybody who loves games has got an idea for one. Fact. Here's where you get to share it with planet Earth. Well, the sub-section of planet Earth that reads *GM*. And when it comes to creative environments it's more like the planet Venus – an atmosphere of poisonous cynicism and crushing pressure. Only the very best game ideas can survive! But don't let that put you off.

SEND US YOUR GAME IDEAS

It's easy. Don't bother drawing us a 50 page design document (unless you want to) – we know that creative game geniuses are busy people. Instead:

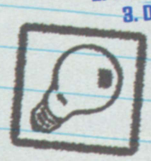
1. TELL US WHAT YOUR GAME IS
2. TELL US HOW IT PLAYS
3. DRAW US A SCREEN SHOT

GOT A GAME IDEA?

And remember it's all about the idea. Not how well you can draw. Any ideas making it into We♥Games gets an item of collectable gaming merchandise from around the office. And if we run out of them, the pick of our stationary cupboard. The highlighters are very good. Send everything to My Game Idea, We♥Games, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Or email it (with your screen shot) to gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk with My Game Idea as the subject. And when you're hailed as the next Shigsy, remember us when we ask for an interview.

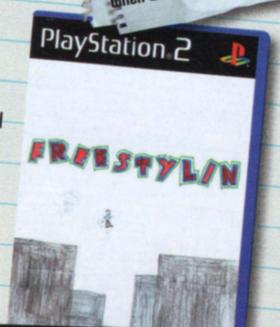
FREESTYLIN'

Copyright Tom White, Harrogate



WHAT IS IT?

Seen all those French dudes that jump across roofs in designer sports wear? Well, Tom White's game is basically a bit like that. Set in Venice, Prague, London and Paris, it features four playable characters, each with different move sets.



HOW IT PLAYS

Imagine *Prince of Persia* but with time limits, or even *THUG2* but without a skateboard. There's a challenge mode, a time trial and Push Off mode where you try to shove opponents off a roof while doing crazy handstands and stuff.

POTENTIAL BEST BIT

Swinging and clambering round the Eiffel tower like a monkey who buys his clothes from JJB Sports.

JUDGEMENT

A neat idea – such a good idea that the guys at Eidos had similar one and are now in the process of making a Free-Running game.

QUOTE FOR THE BOX:

THE WORLD IS YOUR CLIMBING FRAME – SO WATCH HOW YOU GO...

PSP VS DS

This month we've been inundated with mail about the DS and PSP and of course which one is better. So, does the DS need a PSP re-design?

Ugly and huge

Hi *GM*,

In December's issue of *GM*, Cletus ('give me food or I'll kill you'... what ever that's all about) said that the "educated people", as in Nintendo fans, would pick the DS over the brilliant PSP. Well if you want an ugly huge 'handheld' that will only play stupid cartoon games like *Super Mario* and *Pokémon*, and that will only have a few games that use the touch screen – then by all means pick the Nintendo DS. But if you want a cool-looking compact handheld console that plays DVDs and has a built-in MP3 player and brilliant graphics, then pick the PSP. I'm sure the PSP will be a huge success.

David, Tipperary, Ireland

Taking the DS

Dear *GM*,

I am writing to give you my opinion of the Nintendo DS, which I have owned since 29th November. When I opened the box I was not that taken by it, but it was when I switched it on that I succumbed to its charms. From the boot up screen to the intro of *Metroid Prime Hunters* bundled demo, I had a smile on my face like I'd just won the lottery! After negotiating the menu screens with the touch screen, I put the thumb notch on and started playing, when a tear came to my eye. The smoothness of the touch screen is better than any consoles analogue stick. By the time I finished playing, I ran around the house with glee, shouting like a maniac. Unfortunately, I'm the only one in my street with a DS. Everyone else is getting Sony's evil toy. Like destroying Sega wasn't enough, evil Sony now want Nintendo too.

Sanu Miah, e-mail

Like a Guitar

Dear *GM*,

It seems a lot of people put Nintendo down all the time, as it seems people think that just because the GameCube hasn't got the likes of the *GTA* series, it must be bad. Nobody will buy it. They ignore the fact that it has *Zelda*, *Metroid*, *Pokémon*, *Pikmin*.... the list goes on. As for the DS, people say it's big and not nice looking. I will admit that it's not the sharpest, but it isn't that bad. It has many more capabilities than the PSP does. Also people have doubts about it because of the position of your hands, but people still play guitar even though it will hurt for a bit, and they have great fun. I think it will be the same for the DS.

Mike, e-mail

Stylus Over Substance

Dear *GM*,

PSP has already won the handheld war! Why? For two reasons, the Sony Label and the name – PlayStation Portable. I actually own a Nintendo DS and I must say that it's the best handheld ever. The only advantage PSP has is graphics and I don't care about graphics when gameplay is this good! The stylus and the dual screens are a touch of genius! But sadly most people will go "Hey PSP, what does that stand for?"" PlayStation Portable" "WOW! Its like a PS but, erm, portable!" And they will go and buy it. I bet people would buy the Nintendo DS if it was manufactured by Sony, and called the PSP. One of my friends said DS is crap, BUT HE HAD NEVER PLAYED A DS. I bet if all these people played a DS for 30 minutes they would be 'converted'. The DS is beautiful on the inside!

Reece De Beast, e-mail

OFFICE CAM COMPO!

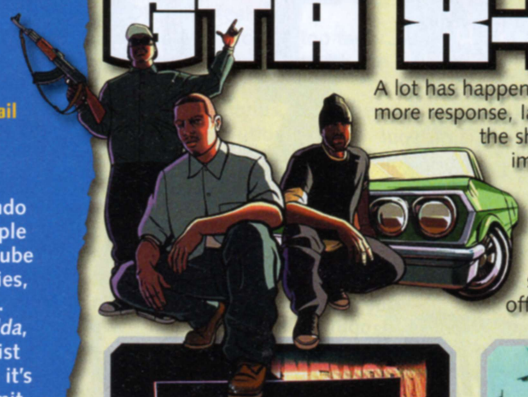
OK, this is definitely the last time you're going to get the chance to win this ace collection of stuff no one wants. So get your pens and paper at the ready. Simply answer this question: how do you spell the Ed's surname? Send your answer to gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk, subject Office Cam Compo or to Office Cam Compo at the usual address. Good luck!

WIN! OUR TAT!

THE TAT IN FULL:

1. Port Royale 2 T-shirt 2. Part Candies 3. *Vegas Make It Big* cocktail shake (no lid) 4. Donkey Kong and juda bloke 5. Light up drinks coaster 6. Squirty toilet seat joke 7. IR micro racer (might not work) 8. *Pokémon* magic wand toy from Japan.

GTA X-Files



A lot has happened since last issue; we've had a bit more response, Ian has still been wittering on about the shark he saw in *Vice City*, but more importantly the Rockstar chiefs (the Houser brothers and Terry Donovan) have said in a interview that there isn't a Bigfoot, a ghost of CJ's mum or a sea serpent. But surely they said that just to put us off the scent! Onwards!

Is this an extra-terrestrial craft? Has anybody else seen this?

Who cares what Rockstar say, we'll keep the search going; until we really get bored.

Dear *GM*,

While playing *GTA: San Andreas* I was in Los Santos when I noticed a blue bubble/circle moving in the sky which led me to believe it must be an ALIEN SPACESHIP! I enclose a photo of the image that I stored on my memory card for evidence!! Is there anybody out there?

Ben Piggot

Well, Ben, we can confirm that, that is indeed a blue bubble/circle in the sky! The significance of this we're not too sure, but it does prove that there is something out there – and it's blue and round.

Hey there *GM*,

I thought I would recommend a website for you, about the whole *GTA* X-Files thing. On this site we are constantly looking for new things in *GTA*, such as special features and new mysteries. And yes, we are also looking for Bigfoot and co. So far, we have had a bit of luck. The website is called http://bigfootsa.proboards36.com See ya there then,

Zak Aston, Ruardean Hill

Great site. Recommended for those who don't want to give the up the ghost, Bigfoot, aliens etc.

Hi *GamesMaster*!

I heard you wanted to see strange stuff in *GTA: SA*, so here's a couple pics of Bigfoot stuff. I'm not 100% sure that they're footprints, but its the closest to Bigfoot as I can get:

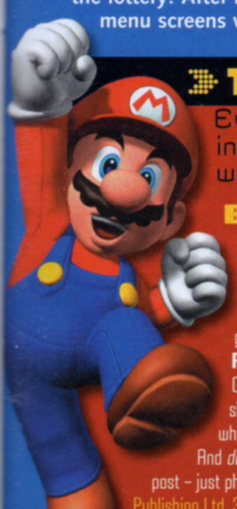
Salt

Salt, I think you're right to be less than 100%, as if they were footprints that would have to be a very big Bigfoot. In fact it would have to be really-big-horribly-deformed-foot. But fair play for finding something that even slightly looks like it. Cheers and keep the faith.

Can't see the footprints? Well Salt has kindly outlined them underneath.

Judging by the size of the footprints, Bigfoot must be as big as a several story house.

THINGS TO MAKE AND DO!



Every issue we set you a different mission deep into creative territory. Try not to spit too much with this one!

BE NEIL BUCHANAN

***Art Attack*'s got nothing on this...**

We know you're a resourceful lot out there. Now you get to prove it. We've got a different challenge every month that'll test whether you've got that 'Buchanan factor' (with the exception of the quiff he had in the '90s). We're starting you off gently this month:

Recreate this shot of Mario using only kitchen things

Got it? So you could use Rich Tea packets for the dungarees, pasta shapes for the hands, and a pudding bowl for the nose – or whatever you fancy. Check with the kitchen owner first, though, eh? And *don't* send us the actual model because it's bound to crumble in the post – just photos please to: Be Neil Buchanan, GamesMaster, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. Get your pics in by 9th March!

SOUND EFFECT ENTRIES

It's not too late to send in your sound effect spelling. Pick your fave gaming sound and then try and write it down – using letters. See last issue for examples and send your efforts to gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk or to the usual address.

WE ♥ GAMES

EXTREME FOOTBALL 2005

WHAT IS IT

A street football game, with the world's greatest players fighting to be the undisputed footballing freestyle champ. The emphasis is on the fighting, as this is a free-for-all freestyle competition with fighting encouraged. Joey Barton will be delighted.

HOW DOES IT PLAY

Think of it as *Pro Evolution* mixed with *Soul Calibur*. Wow the crowds and humiliate your opponents by nailing the most outrageous skill combos. Smash in the goals and smash in Raul's face in the process!

POTENTIAL BEST BIT

Nut-megging Beckham, slapping him on his bald pate, then moon-walking away with the ball balanced on the back of your neck.

JUDGEMENT

Could be a winner, and even at this early stage it sounds a whole lot more fun than EA's *FIFA: Street*. But so does the flu.

QUOTE FOR THE BOX:
MORE DUMMIES THAN MOTHERCARE, MORE TRICKS THAN DERREN BROWN!

Fat and Camp

Dear *GM*, I am extremely disappointed that there are no comedy fat people in your staff. From looking at the front of the mag you all look reasonably normal apart from Dave. I've only read his name, but that alone proves that at least you have comedy staff, even if there are no salad dodgers.

Harry Proudlove, e-mail

That's it, feed that face!

Do y'know what's strange? Ian is just the wrong side of comedy fat, and instead of tipping himself to the funny side with pies, he's actually going on a diet. If you want to stop this, please send letters of support and donations of food to our 'Keep Ian Chubby Appeal', to the usual address.

Special Fried Price

Hi *GM*,

I've read the last two issues in great detail and I'm surprised. With the PSP being £107, I thought that this was a really good deal considering how technologically advanced it is going to be. But in your latest issue the DS is only going to be £80! Now I know that the PSP will be able to do a lot more, but I think the DS is going to rule out of the two. Personally I want both. The PSP for its multi-functioning abilities and games I can relate to as I'm a PS2 owner, but the DS also appeals because of the two screens, the messaging options and I love the stylus. Also it's great to access greatly loved games like *Mario 64* or its equivalent, especially for people that missed out on it the first time around. Could you explain why the price is so surprising, as I thought the DS would be more in price.

Alex Cooke, Nantwich

You could be testing this sexy back loading for a price best described as 'reasonable'.

Now, we must point out that these prices are conversions of the US/Japanese prices, so they may be pretty different by the time of the UK release. But both Nintendo and Sony realise that they need to get as many DS/

With Mark Green from his caravan of retro game love.

We ♥ Old Games

We're blowing the grime of time off the games of yesteryear.

BACK IN TIME: RESIDENT EVIL

SWEET HOME 1989, NES

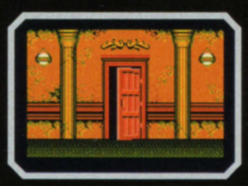
This Capcom title – the story of a news crew trapped in a house of haunting – is the official inspiration for *Resident Evil*. It's a Japan-only RPG, and just about as scary as the blocky late-'80s could manage.

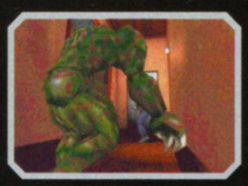
- If the statue-fiddling puzzles don't ring a bell, this stupid animated door-opening rubbish certainly will.

RESIDENT EVIL 1996, PSONE

One big mansion, a handful of S.T.A.R.S. cops – and zombies, zombies, zombies. Big on sudden shocks and hair-bristling camera angles, *Resi* scared us up despite cheapo voice acting and 'find heart key for heart lock' nonsense.

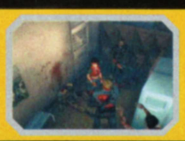
- Stopping your heart since 1996: bad dog making surprise entrance through corridor window was the series' first big shocker.





RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA: (DC)

Resi 2's Claire searches for her brother on a remote prison island – but only finds *horror*.



RESIDENT EVIL: SURVIVOR: (PSONE)

The camera stares out from the skull of Ark Thompson in the first of many first-person *RE*s.

RESIDENT EVIL GAIDEN: (GBC)

Barry! Where's Barry?! He's over on the Game Boy Color, enjoying a cruise... of terror!

COMPUTER GRAVEYARD

COMMODORE 64 (1982-1993)

Recently resurrected as a plug-in 'TV game', the C64 was a big cream breadbin of a computer that helped the UK fall in love with videogames for the first time. It's the world's biggest ever selling computer – *fact* – with meaty colour graphics, sweet sounds, and built-in joystick slots. Distinguishing features: 64K of memory – 1/128th of a PS2 memory card, but massive at the time

INNOVATIONS: Kicking off the first proper system war with the Speccy.

NOW: Grab one off eBay for £30-odd, or swot up on Commodore history at www.lemon64.com.

3 GREAT GAMES:

- *Impossible Mission* – atmosphere-packed robot-dodging platformer
- *The Last Ninja* – classy adventure-fighter
- *Wizball* – starring gaming's only wizard-trapped-in-a-ball

LOADING...

PLEASE WAIT (ZX SPECTRUM, 1982-83)

It really wasn't until late '83 that developers started showing off with loading screens. Until then, this is what you got: nothing. Except, in the best case, the words 'PLEASE WAIT!'. What else were we going to do? Still, don't laugh too hard – how many 21st century hours have you spent staring at blank screens with tiny progress bars?

PSPs out there for them to succeed. For the DS, Nintendo have to demonstrate to 3rd party publishers that it is worth spending money on developing a stylus-based double screen game, as there is a market out there for them. For Sony it's not just the PSP that has to succeed but also they've invested a lot of time in developing the UMD. As there's no other entertainment format that takes UMD, they have sell a lot PSPs or risk a Mini Disc-sized flop. Both companies need a strong launch, which is why we can expect a 'reasonable' price.

Doctored and Evil

Dear *GM*,

I want to talk about *GoldenEye: Rogue Agent*, the recent EA first-person shooter. Am I the only person who's disgusted with it? It's not like the game is completely terrible, I've played worse. But calling it *GoldenEye* when *GoldenEye* – the film, the game, Ian Fleming's Caribbean house – has absolutely nothing to do with the game! Instead, they've plucked a magic golden eye out of their ass and plopped it into the socket of the hero to justify the title. But it's still clear that the only reason they have chosen *GoldenEye* as its title (above every other 007 association) is to exploit the legacy of one of the greatest games. It's just low, cheap and appalling. Surely some Trading Standards people who could punish EA by taking the 007 licence from them.

Tony Mitchell, Kettering

We have to admit *GoldenEye* was a big disappointment, but it's difficult to say whether EA's efforts were exploitative or simply misjudged. What it shouldn't do is taint anyone's memories of the original game, hopefully *Rogue Agent* will be forgotten about soon.

THE GAMING HAIKU

A couple of issues ago we asked for you gaming haiku (Japanese poems with a 5-7-5 syllable formation) and we've in inundated. Well, we've had a few. Here are some of the best...

Snake in camoflauge
Dressing as crocodiles
And eating fierce snakes
Dean Smith, Cambridge

Animal Crossing
It's so addictive and fun
You'll never be done
Caroline King, Tipperary, Ireland

For armchair soldiers
A virtual World War 2
Please give peace a chance
C. Wallace, Liverpool

Ophthalmically
Challenged wizard should have
Gone to spec savers
Shane McAdam, Liverpool

A mark five is here!
Two sub machine
guns in hand
Taller than I
thought
Nicholas A. Stewart, e-mail

The End is Nigh!

Hi *GM*,

Nintendo is revolutionising gaming as we know it with the DS, but I feel that technology is moving too fast. The DS will provide us with the wireless connectivity, dual screens and a stylus. With the Nintendo Revolution coming soon, everyone expects the new console to also include innovative ideas. I just can't help the feeling that soon all ideas will run out, and gaming technology and ideas will reach a peak.

Jason Wan, Blantyre

And if they reach a peak, what next?! Perhaps technology will start going backwards! We'll be seeing in New Years 2010 playing *Tobal No.1* on the PSone. Then in 2018 while we sit in our flying cars, we'll have nothing to entertain us but a hoop and a stick!

WE WANT YOUR JOB!

Rob Walter, Irrational Games

This guy gets to draw super heroes for *Freedom Force vs the Third Reich* on PC. All day!

How did you get your job?
I mailed off my portfolio. The clincher was faxing over the first image that popped into my head upon hearing the name Man-Bot.

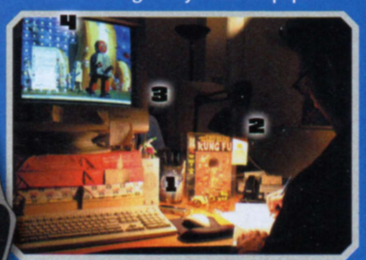
What do you do on a normal day?
Grab a pencil and start drawing up characters and settings.

Best thing about your job?
Being able to draw heroes and villains in garish spandex all day.

Worst thing about your job?
Not being able to be a perfectionist. Sometimes ya just gotta get it out the door.

Any advice for getting a job like yours?
Study the human figure, love to draw and appreciate great design. A basic knowledge of Photoshop and 3dmax is helpful, but if you're really good that can always be taught.

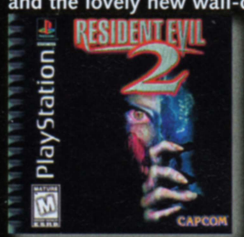
What are you working on right now?
I'm getting a number of new characters I've had floating in my head on paper!



01 *Batman* glass so he can drink like a superhero
02 *Deadly Hands of Kung Fu* comic
03 Lizard figurine
04 MSN messenger so Rob can talk about superheros

RESIDENT EVIL 2 1997, PSONE

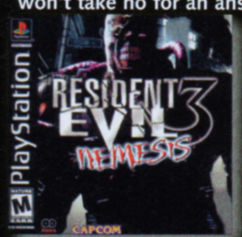
Umbrella's out-of-control T-Virus does a number on Raccoon City. A policeman and a student drive straight into the chaos, and end up in a little cop shop of horrors overrun with zombs – and the lovely new wall-crawling Licker.



Leon S. Kennedy introduced his mannequin-like mannerisms and boy band hair right here.

RESIDENT EVIL 3: NEMESIS 1999, PSONE

Resi 1's Jill Valentine wanders Raccoon City in an inappropriate skirt – and meets Nemesis, a man-beast on a mission to kill all S.T.A.R.S. members. He just won't take no for an answer! Shorter, easier and actionier than previous *Resis*.



RE players used to shaking off zombies by wandering through a door got a surprise: Nemesis knew how to use door handles.

RESIDENT EVIL 0: (GC)

24 hours before *Resi 1*, Rebecca Chambers and ex-marine Billy Coen find bad, bad things.

RESIDENT EVIL: (GC)

Powerfully polished-up GameCube remake of the one with the big scary mansion.

RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK: (PS2)

Last year's four-player PlayStation 2 Raccoon City shamble-about.

YOU DON'T KNOW YOU'RE BORN!

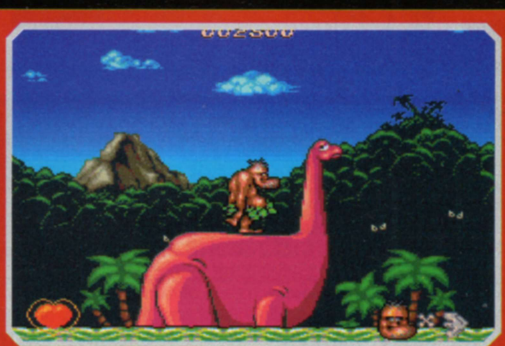
ELECTRIC SHOCH: Reset buttons? Ah, you and your modern extravagances. The odd-looking '80s ZX Spectrum forced you to reset by reaching around the back and manually unplugging and reconnecting the nine-volt power lead. A great way of frazzling the machine's insides. And, of course, yourself.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

CHUCK ROCK

Utterly forgettable Stone Age platform hero from Core Design – yes, the Tomb Raider people.

Now: Hidden somewhere under the mountain of unwanted Lara Croft tat in Core's attic.



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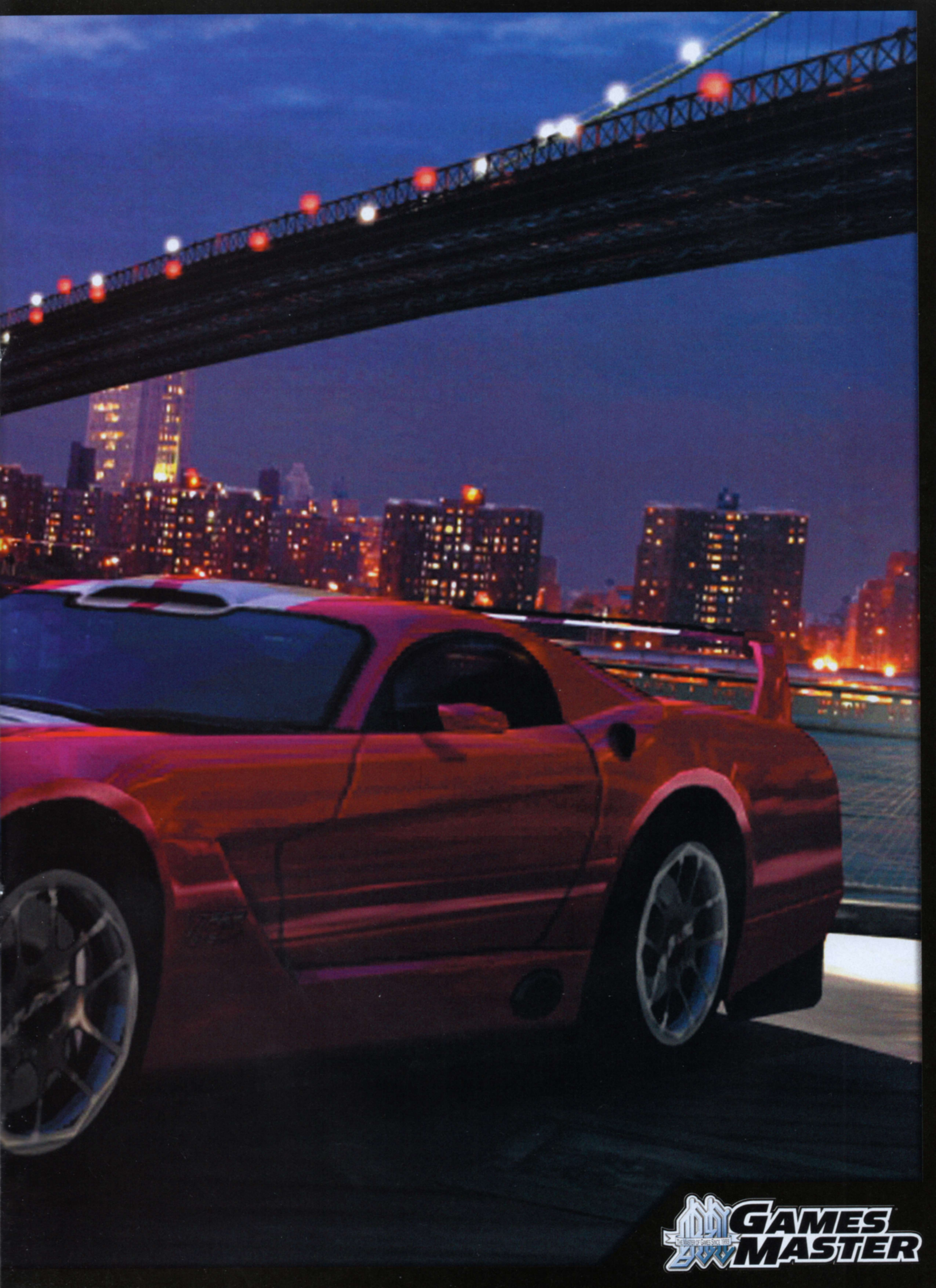
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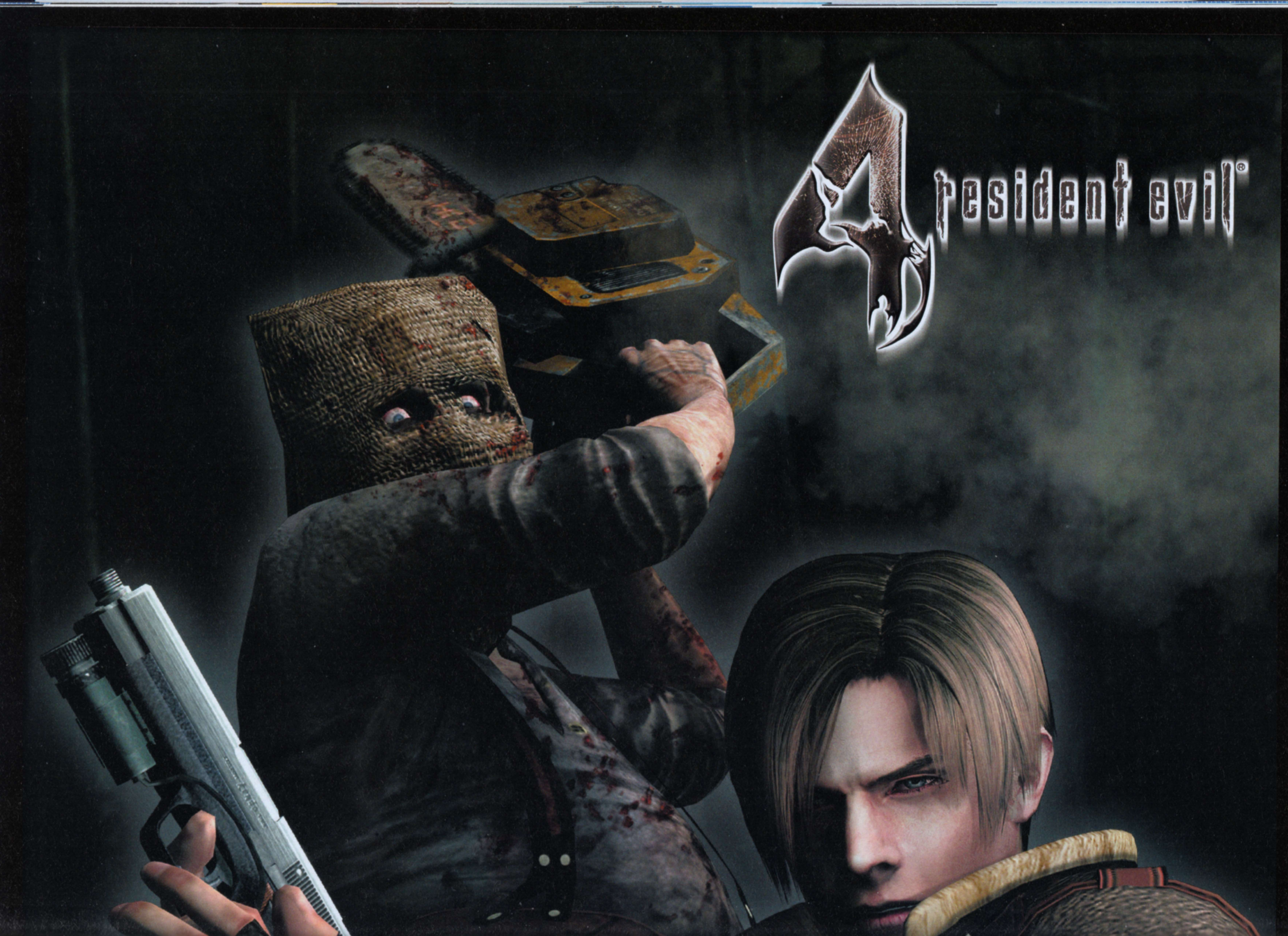
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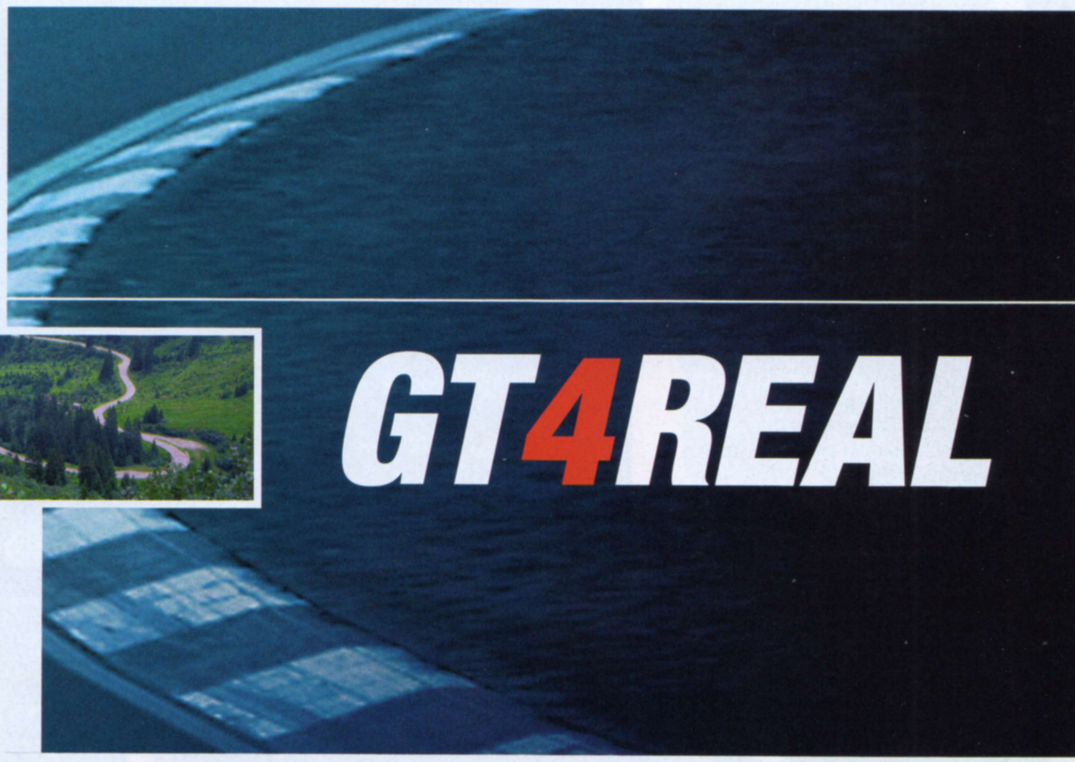

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PlayStation.2

REVIEWS

GAMES MASTER

✔EVERY GAME ✔EVERY FORMAT ✔EVERY MONTH

KATH BRICE

REVIEWS ED

After one of the most frantic Christmas periods for incredible must play games, we thought we might be able to put our feet up for a bit for the start of 2005. We were so, so wrong as we've the rival of Timesplitters, Oddworld Stranger, Gran Turismo 4 and the imperious Resident Evil 4 we've had games that rvial event the best that last year had to offer. Thank the lord for games like Banjo Pilot for giving us some perspective. If it wasn't for them we wouldn't know what was good.

GM REVIEWS GUARANTEE

Only *GM* has reviews you can trust. This is why...

- We play and judge games on every format. We're not biased to any particularly machine. We're just biased towards good games.
- We only review finished code.
- We only use expert, experienced game players who know what they're talking about.
- We're 100% independent and honest. If a game's bad, we'll say so.
- We show and tell you more about a game than any other mag or web site. No one else crams as much in.
- Games are expensive. We want to make sure you never buy a bad one.

It might not have the hype of KILLZONE but Snowblind is one fo the best shoot-'em-ups on the

Electronic Arts tweak their PIFA FOOTBALL for UEFA Champions League - just in time for the knockout stages.

HOW GM'S REVIEWS WORK

Here's a guided tour around the only reviews you should trust.

Alternatives
Also try:
HBOX Link To The Past/Four Swords, The original Zelda co-op, in handheld form. 95%
Or try these:
XBOX Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance 2 88%
PS2 Final Fantasy XI 90%

Game not reviewed on your console? Check out this box to see how the other versions are coming on, or for the most similar game you can play on your machine right now.

It's crunch time. Here's where you'll find the real deal for every game. Each title is rigorously assessed in three disciplines:

GRAPHICS: What does it look like? Does it move smoothly? Enough variety?

GAMEPLAY: Does the game work? Is it satisfying and fun to play, or a pain in the arse?

LIFESPAN: Is there enough of it? Will you be playing this title for months or mere minutes?

The best and worst things about the game dragged out and held at bullet point!

The final verdict in one snappy soundbite, with the only score that counts at its side. Trust no other number!

JUDGEMENT

GM LOVES
- The best co-operative game on the 'Cube and a perfect argument for connectivity
- Brilliant puzzles that aren't too difficult
- A cracking adventure for the single player

GM HATES
- It's a very expensive game to play properly - you'll need four GBAs and link cables for four players
- It looks like a GBA game a lot of the time

GRAPHICS 80%
Cute GBA-type sprites mixed with marvellous special effects.

GAMEPLAY 90%
Amazing co-operative gameplay and some ingenious puzzles.

LIFESPAN 90%
As a multi-player it could last for months, but not so long on your own.

OVERALL
89%
Play with three mates with GBA's, and you've got one of the best games on the 'Cube.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: Final Fantasy Origins, 83%
WORSE THAN: Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker, 97%
WAIT FOR: The new 'adult' Zelda
BEST PRICE: £29.99, amazon.co.uk

REVIEWS • OUT: NOW • FORMAT: GC • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: NINTENDO • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO • SPECIAL: GBA, LINK CABLE • OTHER FORMATS: GBA • CALL: 01932 895390 • PLAYERS: 1-4

WHAT IS IT?

IN GAME CLIP: The first five minutes of play. Learn the ropes of monsters, burn grass!

Find out if the game's on your machine. We'll show every format it's set for, with the arrow showing you which version we've reviewed.

Your 'at a glance' guide to the game and its main features. First-person or third-person? How many levels? Bosses? You'll find it here.

Your instant look at some in- game action so you know how it plays. If it's a slower strategy game we'll show you how it all works.

Still undecided after reading the review? This box tells you about anything better or worth waiting for, and the cheapest place to buy it.

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD

GM's badge of gaming greatness is only given to classic games. If a game gets one of these it's an essential purchase.

THE SCORE

90 TO 100%
Tippety top cream of the crop. If you own the console, buy this!

80 TO 90%
A great game. If you like the sound of it, you should get it in.

70 TO 80%
Neat enough but a little lacking. Still, if you really must have it...

60 TO 70%
A game scuppered by an annoying flaw or two. Shame.

50 TO 60%
Above average but only just. Spend your cash elsewhere.

40 TO 50%
Quite simply not very good. We played it - we didn't like it.

30 TO 40%
Oh dear. Perhaps the programmers should play some 'games'.

20 TO 30%
What the...?! This looks awful and plays awful as well.

10 TO 20%
Not a videogame at all but a device of mental torture.

0 TO 10%
Like dangling your diddlies in a mincing machine.

p70

BEST HANDHELD!

Astro Boy kicks ass on GBA

Japan's answer to MICKEY MOUSE makes his mark on the GBA with some style. It's fair to say the 'the boys a bit special'.

p82

THE BEST GAME!

Find out about Resi's superb return

TimeSplitters

FUTURE PERFECT™

p68

THE BEST RPG!

KOTOR 2 comes to the UK

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p74

WEIRDEST GAME

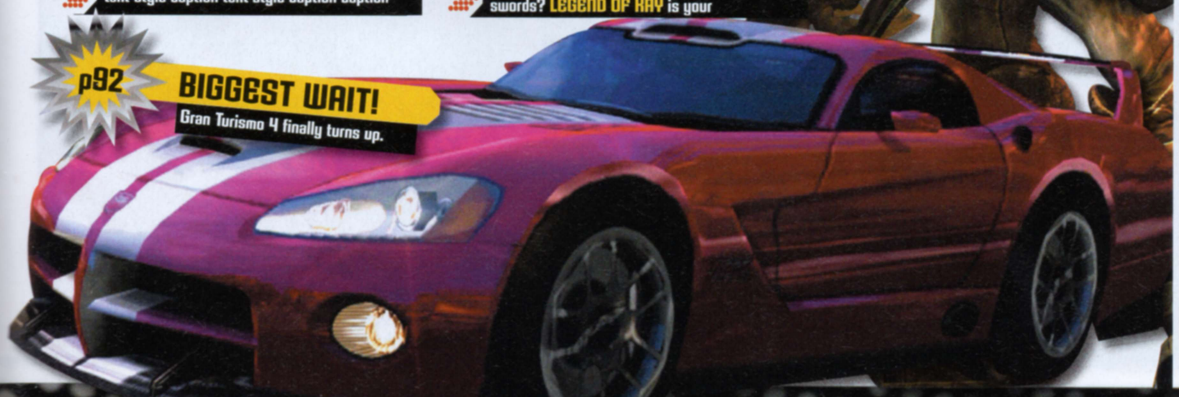
Oddworld lives up to it's name!

Can't get enough of cats with swords? LEGEND OF KAY is your

p92

BIGGEST WAIT!

Gran Turismo 4 finally turns up.



Ace Combat 5: Squadron Leader PS2	90/105
Astroboy GBA	70
Banjo Pilot GBA	98
Blood Will Tell PS2	70
Chronicles Of Riddick: Escape From Butcher Bay PC	98
CSI: Crime Scene Investigation XBOX	98
Donkey Kong: King of Swing GBA	72
Gran Turismo 4 PS2	92
GTR PC	81
The King of Fighters NGAGE	98
King of Fighters: Maximum Impact PS2	97
Knights of the Old Republic 2 XBOX PC	68/104
Legend of Kay PS2	81
Mech Assault 2: Lone Wolf XBOX	96
Oddworld: Stranger's Wrath XBOX	74
Phantom Brave PS2	88
Project Snowblind PS2 XBOX PC	78
Resident Evil 4 CUBE	82/105
Samurai Warriors: Extreme Legends PS2	98
The Settlers: Heritage of Kings PC	98
Shadow Hearts: Covenant PS2	97
SNK Vs Capcom: SVC Chaos PS2 XBOX	88
Timesplitters 3: Future Perfect PS2 XBOX CUBE	64
UEFA Champions League 04-05 PS2 XBOX PC CUBE	89

OUT: 18TH MARCH • **FORMAT:** XB • **PRICE:** £39.99
DEVELOPER: FREE RADICAL DESIGN • **PUBLISHER:** ELECTRONIC ARTS
ONLINE: DEATHMATCH, MULTI-PLAYER • **OTHER FORMAT:** PS2, GC • **CONTACT:** 01932 450000 • **PLAYERS:** 1-4 (OR

WHAT IS IT?

The third in the *'Splitters* series, and the first one to concentrate on a single character – goggle-eyed Vin Diesel lookalike Cortez.

- 34 weapons
- 148 levels and characters

HOW IT PLAYS!

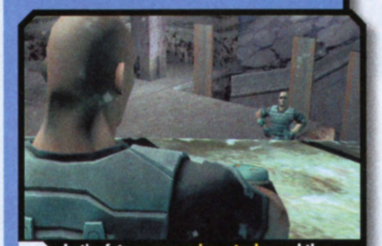
IN-GAME CLIP: Taking down a chopper – by pressing a switch instead of shooting it. Bleh.

TIMESPLITTERS FUTURE PERFECT

Future... perfect? But it's full of flesh-eating robots!

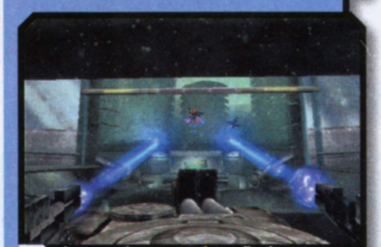
ABOUT TIME

So, how does all this 'meddling with things man was not meant to comprehend' work, then? Easy peasy – you just make friends with your past/future self and get him/you to help you out. Even Doc Brown from *Back to the Future* would have a fit if he saw this...



In the future, you swipe a tank – and then a handsome stranger tries to cadge a lift.

You drive while he shoots – then he leaps off and runs off to... erm, do something else.



Later on, the same tank trundles by – except that this time it's your turn to do the shooting.

TIME FOR A CHANGE?

Future Perfect's prettier, wittier and – according to Dave – less gallic than before.

Protecting your past self pops up in almost every mission – always good for a bit of banter.

Halo-style buggies are an interesting addition – they're even flippable, and can carry passengers.

And it's also the first *'Splitters* to feature bosses – they're well thought out, but not too tough.

Here at *GamesMaster* we've conducted extensive research into time travel – including watching *Terminator 2*, *Back To The Future 3* and nearly every episode of *Quantum Leap* between us – and if there's one thing we've learned, it's that running into yourself is bad. Like, causing-temporal-earthquakes-through-the-fabric-of-reality bad. Which is why, when we were given the chance to protect our past self with a sniper rifle, we tried to cause a rift in four-dimensional space by shooting ourselves in the face, thereby preventing ourselves from existing in the future and being given the sniper rifle and not shooting... hnnnngh! See? It's complicated. Anyway, it didn't work – we just failed the mission completely.

Spazzing about with the space-time continuum aside, though, *Future Perfect* is also the first instalment of *Splitters* to be released under EA's corporate umbrella, and the influence shows. The Free Radical trademarks are all there – the quirky humour, the lack of a jump button, the ultra-smooth panning that sometimes gives us motion sickness – but in other respects it's classic EA. The first level, for instance, reeks of *Medal Of Honor*, with your soldier-boy buddies rescuing you from a crashed ship then leading you in the first assault on the Splitter horde. We reckon the characters also look a bit less floppy-limbed and French, but that could just be us.

More importantly, *Future Perfect*'s also – in theory – a lot friendlier than earlier instalments. For example, a voiceover guides you through the puzzles and sidekick characters take on the shooting duties if you hang back in certain sections. There are checkpoints every five minutes, which – though it cuts down on

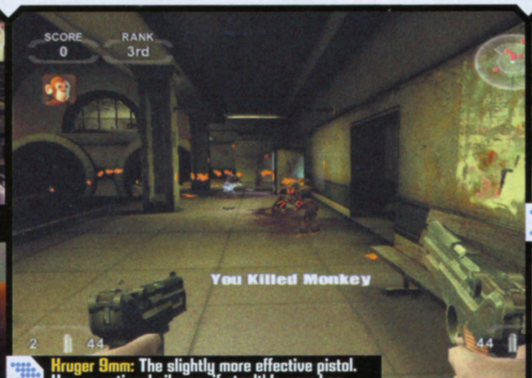
CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS

There are 34 weapons available in Deathmatches. 34! Even more unusually, they're all useful in certain

Baseball bat: Hand to hand – best used for killing zombies.

Bricks: Lethal at close range, but tend to richochet off walls.

Pistol 9mm: The default weapon that you begin with on most levels.

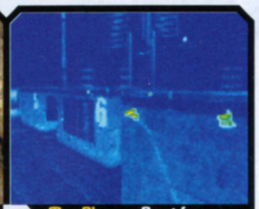


Kruger 9mm: The slightly more effective pistol. Has an optional silencer if stealth's your bag.

LH-18: The best normal gun. No scope, but good damage.

Sci-Fi handgun: Good on its own, lethal when doubled up.

Revolver: Feeling lucky, punk? The most powerful handgun.



Mag-Charger: Great for neutralising robots.

Injector: Two tranq darts are enough to exploderise most flesh-beasts.

EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF

Well, every zombie/clown/unspeakable fish monster, anyway. In Arcade, everything's fully customisable, from the guns and 'bots you use to the rules you fight under.

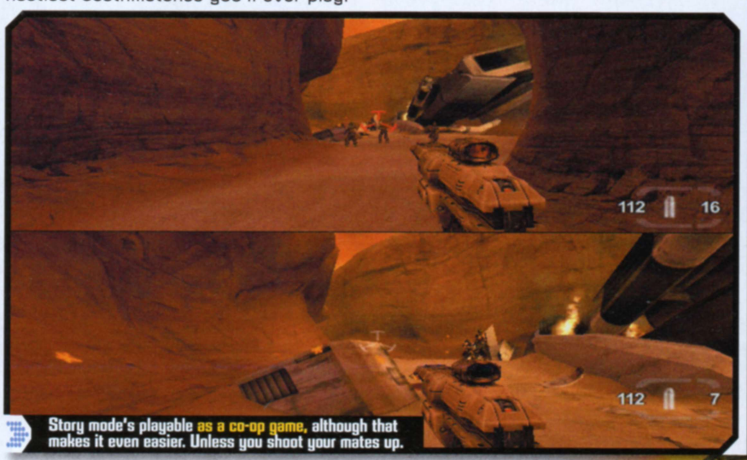
Shrink is one of the most interesting deathmatch options – you get smaller as you take damage.

Then there's the classic Last Man Standing – nine lives, and a stream of death-hungry 'bots after your ass.

Or Assault, a team game based on taking territory. Turrets and vehicles are perfect for this.

FRIENDLY FIRE

'Splitters is really all about the multi-player, and with online support or system link it's a joy to play. There's very little camping – it's one of the quickest, nastiest deathmatches you'll ever play.



Story mode's playable as a co-op game, although that makes it even easier. Unless you shoot your mates up.

GANG'S ALL HERE

There are 149 characters in *'Splitters* - 149! Each comes with a mini-biography and their own animations, with favourites like Duckman Drake and Robofish making a welcome return. The only one missing's the Elvis Impersonator - where's he gone, EA?

This is the Deerhaunter. He's a bit conspicuous, mind.

Look at all those bots! Each with their own daft catchphrase.

backtracking – actually makes things tougher, because it'll frequently save while you've only got a whisper of health left. Medipacks are pretty thin on the ground – usually about one or two in every level – although the game's usually easy enough that this isn't a problem.

What's more questionable is the sheer amount of non-FPS action in this *'Splitters*. Although there's still a lot of shooting, it's broken up by a constant stream of mini-games – some good, others not so much fun. The mine cart section, for instance, is brilliant – a rapid-fire break from running around where you're still shooting zombies with the controls you're used to. The Battlebot section's a bit more questionable – it's a boring on-rails chug around in a giant robot, shooting down planes that you'd honestly rather tackle on foot. And the sliding block puzzles in the machine wars level nearly ruin it. *Resi 4*, also out this month, shows how it's possible to keep things feeling fresh

situations, and even the big guns have their weaknesses. Pick a favourite!

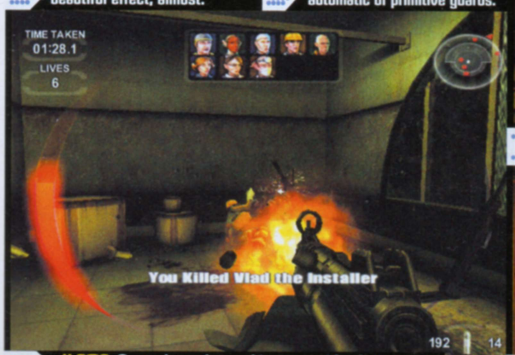
Flamethrower: Classic – beautiful effect, almost.

Machine gun: Bog-standard automatic of primitive guards.

Shotgun: Only two shells, and reloads like a moose, but great for the unexpected. Blammo!

Soviet rifle: The most powerful machine gun, but no double-up.

Harpoon gun: *'Splitters'* best new weapon by miles.



H-SMG: A cut above the machine gun, with a better rate of fire. Get two, and you're practically unstoppable.

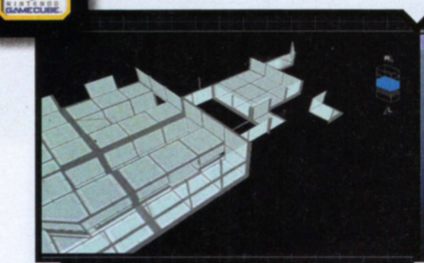
Dispersion gun: A wibbly effect makes it difficult to target.

Tactical 12 gauge: Comes with eight blasts, but slow to reload.

Electrotool: Mostly used for overloading electrical kit, but also handy against 'bots.

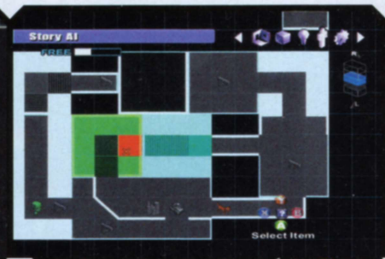
MAPMAKER, MAPMAKER

TimeSplitters' level editor's always been about ease of use, and this one's no different. This time, though, it's possible to create Story mode levels and share them online. You can't put bosses in to massacre everyone, sadly.



First, decide on a theme and slap some tiles down. You can view a wireframe model.

Then, stick some items in – new ones include buggies and remote controlled cats.



For Story mode, you'll need to set enemy AI – you can choose how tough and intelligent they are.

Finally, preview the whole thing. Lighting a bit garish? Wrong 'theme'? It's all just a click away.

HEADS... UP!

Yes, there's a Big Heads cheat, but you'll also unlock things such as extra-fat characters...

Best of all are slow-mo deaths – perfect for seeing bodies flailing in slow motion.

And then there's Paintball mode – always funny with a machine gun.

CHALLENGES

The challenges are much tougher than the main game – you'll nail bronze, but golds and secrets are a different matter.

Cat racing's pretty good – corners are tricky, but you can right yourself.

Smashing bottles is tricky with juiced-up henchpeople holding them...

But our favourite challenge has to be this – making cyber-chimps dance with the Electrotool. Don't jolt them too hard – they explode...

You can shoot hoops with Cortez's magic magnetic glove if you like.

It's possible to play levels from the original *'Splitters* against the clock.

when you're just shooting zombies in the face – so why's *'Splitters* resorting to this stuff? Play the game on Normal and there aren't *nearly* enough moments when it's just you against an avalanche of enemies. Oddly enough, there are plenty of genius moments like this in the Challenge mode – including blowing up an army of headless cow-carcasses with the Injector pistol – so there's still plenty of shooting to get on with when things get tougher. It's just a shame there isn't more of this sort of action in the main game.

Where *'Splitters* really comes into its own, as always, is the Multi-player modes. For people with no mates, there are the Arcade leagues, tough slices of 'bot-battling action that'll let you get in some serious trigger time. These take place across 10 maps designed specifically for deathmatches, and getting the gold medals is tougher than getting hold of some plutonium for your flux capacitor. The 'bots are programmed well enough to act a bit like humans, so there's plenty of crouching to be done. Of course, this is all just practice for the best bit of *'Splitters* – the four-player mode.

Four-player *'Splitters* is a beautiful thing. It's a game that doesn't let you blink in case you get harpooned, *does* let you develop cunning tactics such as

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS

There's another 16 ways to quick dispense death...

Plasma autorifle: A bit like the plasma gun from *Halo*.

SBP500: The weapon of the elite troops in later levels.

Monkey gun: the most terrifying – but it chews up ammo.

Rocket launcher: Now with death-o-matic five-in-a-row secondary fire, to use all your ammo in one go.

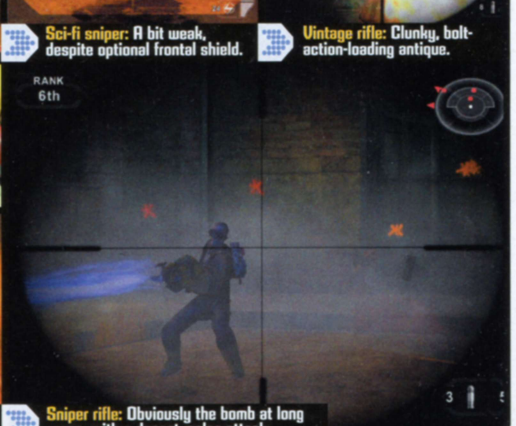
Sci-fi sniper: A bit weak, despite optional frontal shield.

Vintage rifle: Clunky, bolt-action-loading antique.

Minigun: The eternal question – keep it cool or risk it overheating?

Heatseeker: Predictably brilliant – just don't miss...

Ghost gun: Can only kill – d'oh – ghosts in the main game.

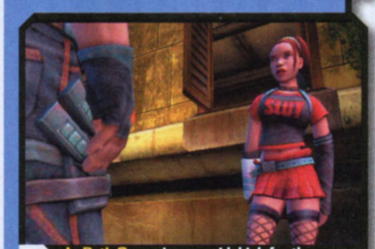


Sniper rifle: Obviously the bomb at long range, with a decent melee attack.

HI, LADIES

Apart from the usual selection of zombies and robots with fishbowls on their heads, there's a liberal smattering of attractive ladies throughout *Future Perfect*. You don't normally have to shoot them.

Anya is your radio contact, and gives you advice. Cortez obviously fancies her.

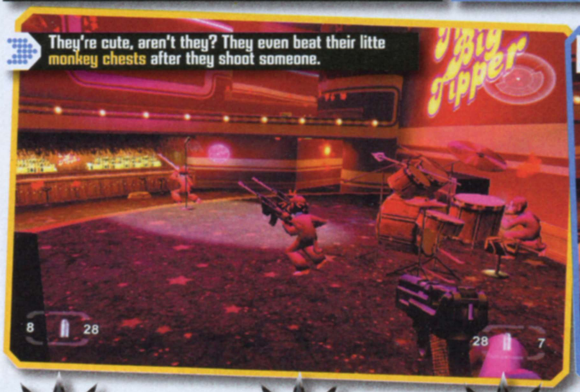


Jo-Beth Casey is your sidekick for the zombie levels, and is handy with a shotgun.

Amy Chen is similar to *Perfect Dark*'s Joanna Dark – she even does cartwheels.

LITTLE MONKEYS

The monkeys are hard to see and their inflatable-doll expression means they aren't even cute. Still, Monkey Assist mode's always good for a laugh.



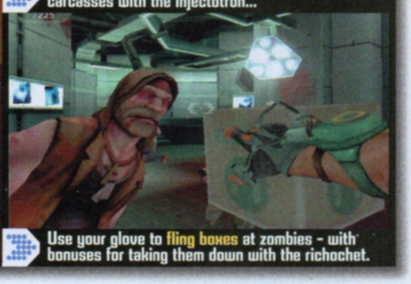
They're cute, aren't they? They even beat their litte monkey chests after they shoot someone.

cap cap cap

BEST BIT!

The Behead The Undead challenges are always the most satisfying bits of *'Splitters*.

The second challenge sees you blowing up cow carcasses with the injectotron...



Use your glove to fling boxes at zombies – with bonuses for taking them down with the richochet.

sticking remote mines on gun turrets and – crucially – rewards the weakest players with a little squad of monkey helpers. If we've got one complaint, it's that it doesn't use the new vehicles quite as much as it could – there's only one really big expansive map (Siberia) and a shortage of buggies. Still, you can always design your own maps in the level editor, and it's even possible to force mates through a Story mode map of your own design if you're feeling especially sadistic.

So, if we could go back in time and leave our past selves a note about *'Splitters*, what would we write? Well, apart from having a 'P.S' about not throwing a pad at Dave in case it bruises his peach-like face, it'd probably say something like, "Although it's technically the best FPS on PS2, *'Splitters'* decision to ditch kill-craziness for comedy doesn't always work. Also, it suffers from the competition on Xbox, because even in deathmatch it clearly isn't as good as that on *Halo 2*."

Of course, if our past selves had got that, we'd immediately have ripped it up for fear of causing some sort of temporal rift, so we'd probably have gone ahead and bought *TimeSplitters: Future Perfect* anyway. That's the thing about time travel.

Other Formats

Also on:

PS2 The visuals aren't quite as crisp, all the online modes play just as well as on Xbox.

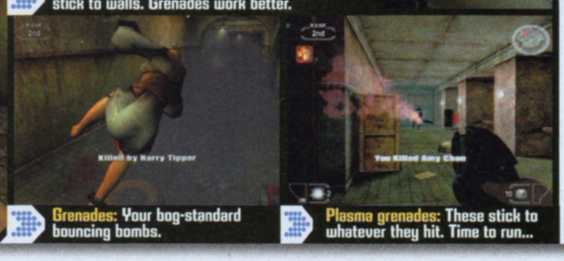
CUBE Supports four player split-screen but not link up, and no online unfortunately.

Flare gun: Rubbish and slow, but it *can* set people on fire.

Proximity mines: Explode when someone goes near them.

Remote mines: Useful in the more corridor-packed deathmatch levels.

Timed mines: Crap, although you can make them stick to walls. Grenades work better.



Grenades: Your bog-standard bouncing bombs.

Plasma grenades: These stick to whatever they hit. Time to run...

JUDGEMENT

130%

GM LOVES

- Multi-player mode – all of it
- The Harpoon gun. And the minigun
- The 'classic' levels – the Chinese restaurant's always been brilliant

GM HATES

- The fiddly puzzle bits in the middle of all the shooting
- Getting shot in the knees by monkeys, repeatedly

GRAPHICS 90%

Dripping with style – shame you can't always tell which doors are openable.

GAMEPLAY 85%

Stacks of shooting fun, but too little of it's in the main game. There you go, eh?

LIFESPAN 90%

Months' worth of challenges to hone your skills on before you take it online.

OVERALL

88%

Again, more toybox than coherent game – but still brilliant. Get it in for those multi-player sessions alone.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Goldeneye:Rogue Agent, 60%

WORSE THAN: ..... Halo, 81%

WAIT FOR: ..... Area 51, Q1

BEST PRICE: ..... £29.99, amazon.co.uk

REVIEW

OUT: 11TH FEBRUARY • FORMAT: XB • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: OBSIDIAN
PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS • ONLINE: DOWNLOADS • OTHER FORMATS: PC • CALL: 0207 7633 0633 • PLAYERS: 1

XBOX PCCD

WHAT IS IT?

Sequel to last year's smash Xbox role playing game which gave *Star Wars* games a good name again.

- Play through as both Light Side and Dark Side Jedi
- Built on same technology as original

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: Can you see an enemy in the distance? Don't panic; activating the old Force-Speed can close that gap before they've even got their blasters ready.

DROID RAGE

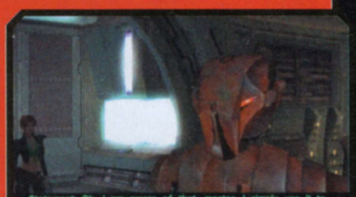
The Force is an odd-un. While you have to be nice to people, droids are fair game for slaughter. Yoda is a Carbon Fascist! These are the mechanoids who'll be on the front line of the civil rights manoeuvre.

Doo-deet?

T3-M4 is familiar to players of the first game, and he continues his gunning here.

[Influence: Failure] As anxious as I am to give away all my trade secrets, you will understand if I choose not to answer such questions.

GO-TO is capable of taking over minds. He's painted black, so you know he's morally iffy.



Statement: Oh, I am aware of that, master. I simply use it to give you the illusion of control and obedience. Humans often need such comforts until the end comes.

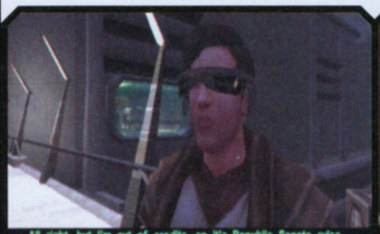
Assassination droid HK-47 returns, complete with amusing anecdotes about killing.

STAR WARS KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC 2: THE SITH LORDS

Lisping playground game time: playing Sith chase again...

QUEER EYE FOR JEDI

The problem with living in the far past (even if it looks a bit like the far future) is that men really are more than a tad philistine in their dress sense. Take your companions for instance – these chaps could do with some fashion tips.



All right, but I'm out of credits, so it's Republic Senate rules.

Atton Rand is a Han-Solo style smuggler. But why is he wearing glasses? Lose them, already.

The Republic is a stagnant beast, that had been killing its people for years before the wars began.

Mandalore is a leader of warriors, which is why no-one's mentioned that metallic is so last year.

Yes, General?

Bao-Dur knows how to accessorise with a little droid. But he's in desperate need of a exfoliant.

Let's play a game. All those who are considering naming their children Luke or Leia, head over to this corner. Now, all of those who think the *Star Wars* movies were perfunctory pulp action films and that all those who've just wandered into that corner should grow up, head into this corner over here. The original *Knights of the Old Republic* managed to please both these groups. Talk about a Jedi Mind Trick.

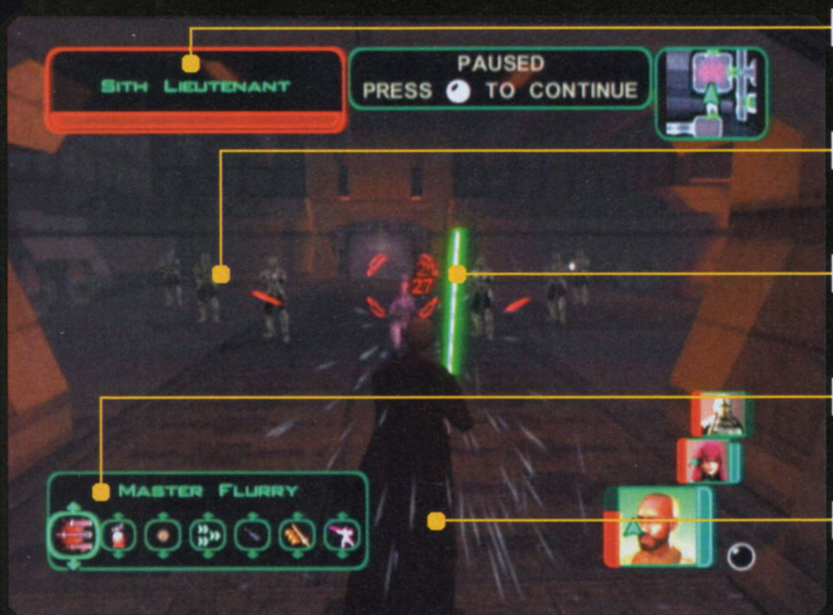
Those who experience vein-bursting pleasure from hearing three notes of the Williams' soundtrack loved it because it was the most honest attempt at creating a *Star Wars* game, lovingly creating a universe for you to explore.

JEDI OR NOT

Those who despised it... well, *KOTOR* was set in a time distant enough from the *Star Wars* films to not be tarnished, and it's a world to explore, meaning that you can slowly get engulfed in the place too. A year on *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic 2: The Sith Lords* appears, and manages to do the same thing again.

SABRE RATTLING

You'll mostly find yourself outnumbered in *The Sith Lords*. After all, you can only take three people on any given mission. Which makes it lucky that you're entirely capable on taking swathes of troops in one go. Here's how.



SPOTTED!

When you first spot an enemy a helpful warning like this appears. In case you were having a nap.

ENEMY FIRE

The opposition. You can skip between each with the triggers to choose who's your target.

SABRE TIME

Handy for the deflection of blasterbolts. Can be customised to make even more powerful.

STAY AHEAD

The menu bar allows you to manage your attacks. Press the white button to pause the action.

WARDROBE

Robes for battle? They're useful, as heavy armour prevents you from using some force powers.

KNIGHT TIME

Mira is a cute bounty-hunter in a bolero-jacket. Alternatively, if you're a Dark Side Jedi, you can get a big hairy wookie.

It's at this traveling Jedi trapped in this ship. Everything's... everything's just too quiet.

[Influence: Success] It is not a subject which I have spoken of – since its destruction.

Visas Marr has decided to rock the prophetess look by doing the 'I can see without my eyes' thing – a good excuse for iffy pathfinding.

The Handmaiden is noted as being really hard. Good work. Play as a male character, and you'll pick up the Disciple.

I am training. So that if danger should strike, my body and my reflexes will be prepared.

I have no time for questions – and any answers will have to wait until we stand within the Exilare together.

Kreia is your teacher in game, and source of good advice. She's also rocking the prophetess look. How embarrassing for her.

KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC 2: THE SITH LORDS

STASIS CHECK

Clever utilisation of your Force-thingies is paramount to survive in the *Old Republic*. Here's an example of how a single power can entirely turn around a fight – specifically, Force Stasis that freezes your opponents.

Look - enemies. Press the white button to pause.

Select the force Force Stasis from the left menu with the D-pad.

TRY THIS!

And then un-pause to see the results. A quick tap of the A button will send your Jedi off to slay.

Incapacitating one opponent should allow you to sabre up the other guy in peace and quiet.

NEAR OR FAR?

The advantages of close-combat and distance sniping have to be carefully weighed up. Get close and you can overwhelm those who rely on guns alone. Stay far away and you don't have to smell them.

As the Handmaiden demonstrates, being close up has the major advantage of making you look really far too cool for words. We'll go with that.

Meanwhile, if you stay away you look like an old woman in a brown robe. We'll be charging in, if you don't mind, thank you.

The pain of heartburn can be averted. The pain of flamethrower burns is trickier.

The problem is that it's basically the same game. The set up is the same, and mechanics remain virtually identical. The plot even takes you to locations you visited in the first game, 10 years on.

FLASH BACK

Although this creates a fun resonance in a "They really let the neighbourhood fall apart" way, it feels a little cheap. There's lots of recycled material here. However, they have made some welcome additions. A new manufacturing system has been introduced, allowing you to reform unwanted components into something new. Much like taking back rubbish presents at Christmas, and then getting what you really want. Also, the plot is just as strong as the original and the characters are even better written. The game's biggest problem is the sense that it's a rush job. It's a shame that a game this important has a large number of bugs, more than the original. Which is kind of regression.

But it's easy to forgive *KOTOR 2*'s sins, its dabbling in the dark side are easily overlooked in favour of its grand gestures to the light across its 40 hours of high adventure.

"IT'S A SHAME THAT A GAME THIS IMPORTANT HAS A LARGE NUMBER OF BUGS"

Other formats

Also on:

PC *Knights of the Old Republic 2* is released on PC this month.

Or try these:

CUBE Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker 97%
PS2 Haven: Call of the King..... 67%

BEST BIT!

If lightsabres have ever looked as good in a game, then we haven't seen it. And there's a lot of them too. Man!

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD

A little blasting never hurt anyone. Except - y'know - your targets.

Droids are particularly vulnerable to certain force powers. Like 'Destroy Droid'.

JUDGEMENT

ROBIN

GM LOVES

- Continues to be one of the best RPGs on any console
- Even better written characters than the first one
- The lightsabre Herr-ummm powering up

GM HATES

- It's just the same game, with advances being on the titchy side
- Lots of re-used material and too many bugs for comfort. Booo
- The action sub-games are a bizarre inclusion

GRAPHICS 86%
Not up to the best on the Xbox, and no real advancement over the original.

GAMEPLAY 90%
Deep RPG accessible to beginners and lots of things to fiddle with for experts.

LIFESPAN 70%
It'll take you forty hours to play through once with alternative endings.

OVERALL

90%

Still a great game, but it's the same game. If you want more adventures in the Old Republic, it's for you.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN:..... Baldur's Gate, Dark Alliance, 80%
WORSE THAN:..... Fable, 91%
WAIT FOR:..... Jade Empire, 18th March
BEST PRICE:..... £29.99, amazon.co.uk

REVIEW

• OUT: MARCH • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99
• DEVELOPER: SEGA • PUBLISHER: SEGA • ONLINE: NO
• OTHER FORMATS: NONE • CONTACT: 0208 995 3399 • PLAYERS: 1-2

One of the best aspects of the game is that it has tons of bosses. You fight a few in every section, and there's plenty of variety from one hulking monster to the next.

BLOOD WILL TELL

Samurai slasher meets biology lesson...

Try to imagine the trauma: your dad sits you down one day and tells you that when you were a baby, he sold 48 of your body parts to demons in exchange for power. It's a blow, make no mistake. You've basically only got a torso and a head. And even your head has no eyes or ears. You almost feel stupid for not realising this disfigurement sooner.

BODY POPPING

A third-person slash-'em-up with a twist, *Blood Will Tell* has you fighting one demon after another in a quest to retrieve all 48 of your body parts. First on the list is your left eye, which changes the game from black and white to colour. This is quickly followed by a leg that enables you to sprint, and a set of vocal chords that let you talk. Later on in the game your newly-reunited limbs give you more abilities such as extra strength.

There is one pro to being like the victim of the organ-removing brother of Harold Shipman. Which is that some of your body parts have been replaced with super-big weapons. Now you've got knives for arms and a guided missile for a leg. Some compensation at least.

The plot's mental, but the game itself is enjoyable. The combat is easy to get to grips with, and moves such as the slice attack have you hitting button combos within a time limit to defeat the enemy and pick up bonus items. The numerous bosses you encounter are impressive – the only let down is the camera, which occasionally loses you completely. Still, when you're battling to get your oesophagus back you don't expect it to be easy.

BLOOD SPILL

Fighting as main character Hyakkimaru, you have two main attack buttons for a heavy and light attack. Building up magical power fighting also lets you unleash special attacks.

Killing enemies using more elaborate techniques results in more power ups.

You have close up melee attacks using sword and long range attacks using guns.

JUDGEMENT — KATH

GRAPHICS 58%
Plenty of gore but it's not the best looking game on the shelves.

GAMEPLAY 72%
Basic hacking and slashing combined with enough variety to keep you playing.

LIFESPAN 55%
Easy at the start but it gets more challenging as you progress.

OVERALL

68%

Onimusha-esque action that's slightly scuppered by the camera. Average with occasionally inspired combat.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:.....King Arthur, 61%
WORSE THAN:.....Onimusha 3, 92%
WAIT FOR:.....Devil May Cry 3, 24th June
BEST PRICE:.....£29.99, amazon.co.uk

• OUT: 11TH FEBRUARY • FORMAT: GBA • PRICE: £29.99
• DEVELOPER: TREASURE • PUBLISHER: THQ • ONLINE: NO
• OTHER FORMATS: NONE • CALL: 01483 767656 • PLAYERS: 1

Astro Boy packs an arsenal that makes him the indisputable King of the Cyborgs.

Mechs, Easter Island statues and Egyptian pyramids. Very funky.

ASTRO BOY: OMEGA FACTOR

Astro-nishingly good stuff...

Just what is it with Treasure and shoot-'em-ups? These guys seem to have the Midas touch when it comes to cramming our screens with lush sprites to blast into oblivion.

Astro himself is a resourceful young chap (well, super-robot actually) with a loving nature and a heart of gold. Mind you, he still packs a gatling gun in his trollies in case of an emergency. The game is a classic beat-'em-up cum shooter based on anime legend Osamu Tezuka's much-loved cartoon series.

Even if anime doesn't float your boat, you'll still be blown away by *Astro Boy*'s wicked visual style. Our hero and his assortment of foes are a lavishly animated fest of cartoony goodness. The game features loads of cute graphical touches and amazingly – given the amount of action crammed into this cart – hardly any slowdown. Astro's special attacks will also bring a smile to your face. Our cyborg chum packs a fair amount of heat, but pump his laser weapon up to maximum capability and gawp at a beam that fills the screen, mashing foes into pulp. His enemies put up a good fight, too, such as the Magnamite – who is equipped with lazer beams that spew out of his mouth.

BOY WONDER

With truckloads of stages to jet and punch your way through, not to mention a seemingly unending stream of the most original (and bloody massive) bosses we've seen in years, *Astro Boy* is pure gaming nectar. There's even the odd flying level to keep you on your toes, and some well-integrated RPG elements that help add longevity even when you thought the challenge was over.

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD

Astro Boy is one of those games that are so darn good they can be recommended to almost anyone. This is typical gold from Treasure and another must-buy effort from one of our favourite developers in the biz. Bravo chaps.

BOSS-MATIC

Treasure's rep for dreaming up some of the greatest-ever game baddies is legendary, and in *Astro Boy* they have excelled themselves. Here they are in all their many tentacled glory...

This freak is called the Magnamite. Watch out for his slimy tentacles.

This cyborg condor drops flaming bird poop on you from up high. Take that, bird brain!

JUDGEMENT — ROB

GRAPHICS 91%
2-D goodness ahoy! Pushes the humble GBA to the max.

GAMEPLAY 89%
This retro japery is why we bought a handheld in the first place.

LIFESPAN 82%
Challenging is not the word. A real pick-up-and-play kind of game.

OVERALL

91%

This little gem is right up there with *Castlevania* and *Metroid* as one of the GBA's killer aps.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:..Metal Slug Advance, 81%
WORSE THAN:.....Metroid Fusion, 92%
WAIT FOR:.....Legacy of Spirits, TBC
BEST PRICE:.....£26.99, play.com

THE ROUND TABLE IS FOR HEROES ONLY. WITH THIS LAVISH ADAPTATION OF THE BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE BY PRODUCER JERRY BRUCKHEIMER YOU WILL EXPERIENCE, THAT THE MIDDLEAGES HAVE A BRIGHT FUTURE WHEN IT COMES TO ACTION. PLAY ONE OF FIVE PLAYABLE CHARACTERS AND PLACE YOURSELF RIGHT AT THE SIDE OF THE LEGENDARY KING ARTHUR. INCREASE YOUR FAME WITH FIVE INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS AND ABILITIES - IN THREE DIFFERENT COMBATSTYLES - EVEN WHILE RIDING A HORSE. FOTOREALISTIC ENVIRONMENTS BRING YOU CLOSER TO THE PAST THAN EVER BEFORE. TAKE YOUR SEAT - AND ACTION.

BUENA VISTA INTERACTIVE

XBOX NINTENDO GAMECUBE PlayStation 2

12+ www.pegi.info

www.konami-europe.com

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• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: GBA • PRICE: £29.99 • DEVELOPER: PAON • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
• ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: GBA LINK-UP • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • CONTACT: 01932 838230 • PLAYERS: 1-4

GAME BOY ADVANCE

WHAT IS IT?

DK King of Swing

Everyone's favourite pixelated simian, Donkey Kong, is back – but with a difference.

- Unique 'swing' control system
- An mix of platforming and puzzles
- More bananas to eat then ever before!

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: Kong's climbed for miles and the end of the level is within his sights. But, before he's home and dry, one more evil dragonfly remains to be splatted.

GET A GRIP

King of Swing ain't your run-of-the-mill platformer, so it's worth getting up to speed with exactly how Kong handles. Tip: prepare to die often.

DONKEY KONG: KING OF SWING

He's the king of the swingers, the jungle VIP...

Once an evil villain whose only purpose in life was to hurl barrels at an Italian plumber, **Donkey Kong is now a fully-fledged star in his own right. And right now the world sorely needs our favourite barrel-chested chimp.**

Ya see, there's a trouble brewing deep in the jungle. The evil King K. Rool has pinched Cranky Kong's medallions that prove who's the rightful King of the Jungle, so the old duffer has despatched Donkey to save the day. Cue the usual platforming fare then? Well, not exactly...

Good old Ninty has well and truly cemented their reputation as innovators supreme recently. If the launch of the touch screen DS wasn't enough for you, how about last issue's bonkers bongo fest that was *Donkey Kong: Jungle Beat* (*GM*156: 88%)?

SWING STAR

Not wanting to leave the GBA out in the cold, Nintendo have come up with the most innovative platformer of the year so far. You'll – quite literally – be doing Kong's leg (or should that be arm?) work for him.

Alternatively pressing the GBA's L and R shoulder buttons allows our hero to build up clockwise or anti-clockwise momentum, before propelling himself across the level. In this manner, Kong'll travel up screen rather than across it, collecting bananas and whacking Rool's minions on route to the big boss man himself. It's genius we tell you. *Genius*.

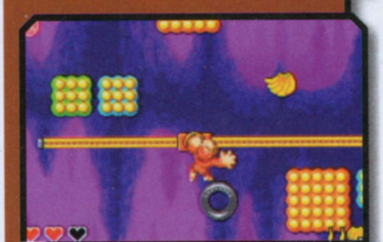
King of Swing is a lot of fun. And it's all the more impressive considering Nintendo could simply have rehashed one of Kong's classic SNES outings, and nobody would have batted an eyelid. But be warned: it constantly treads that fine line between dangerously addictive and downright frustrating. Many a gamer will undoubtedly die for what seems the millionth time, before walking away whinging that Nintendo are simply innovating for innovation's sake.

Give it five minutes, though, and they'll no doubt be back for just one more crack at the last level... GM

FEATURING!
Diddy and Dixie Kong

Hold the L and R triggers, look constipated then prepare to propel yourself in the air!

Collect bananas whenever possible – you need all the health you can get.



Rotate the gears and cranks in the right direction to solve the occasional puzzle.

WHO'S THE BOSS?

This being a *Kong* game, there are some nerve-jangling confrontations with some pretty hefty bosses at the end of each stage. Here's a typical example...

Cling on to these handily-placed pegs as if your life depended on it, 'cause it does.

Hold both trigger buttons to summon Kong's charge attack. Pow! This boss is history.

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GM LOVES

+ Kong, of course. He's a paragon of cuteness and a gaming institution
+ Nintendo's cahones to keep on innovating and releasing games like this that really try something different

GM HATES

- Stone Age visuals that stink worse than Kong's armpits
- Having to constantly concentrate so hard
- All things considered, it's a bit of a one-idea wonder

GRAPHICS 72%
Bold and colourful, but *King of Swing* still looks horribly dated.

GAMEPLAY 75%
The more you play, the more likely you'll hurl your GBA through the window.

LIFESPAN 59%
Very challenging, provided you've got the patience to persevere.

OVERALL

70%

It's either genius or the work of the devil. Either way, there are more fun platformers on the GBA.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events, 67%
WORSE THAN: Super Mario Advance 2, 95%
WAIT FOR: Mario Party Advance, February
BEST PRICE: ..... £29.99, amazon.co.uk

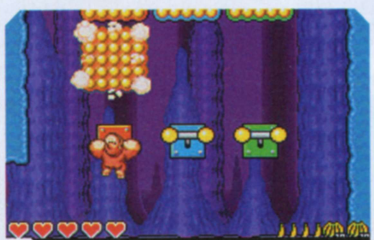
Other Formats

The closest alternatives on your format:

This is a pretty unique experience you're not gonna find anywhere else but on GBA!

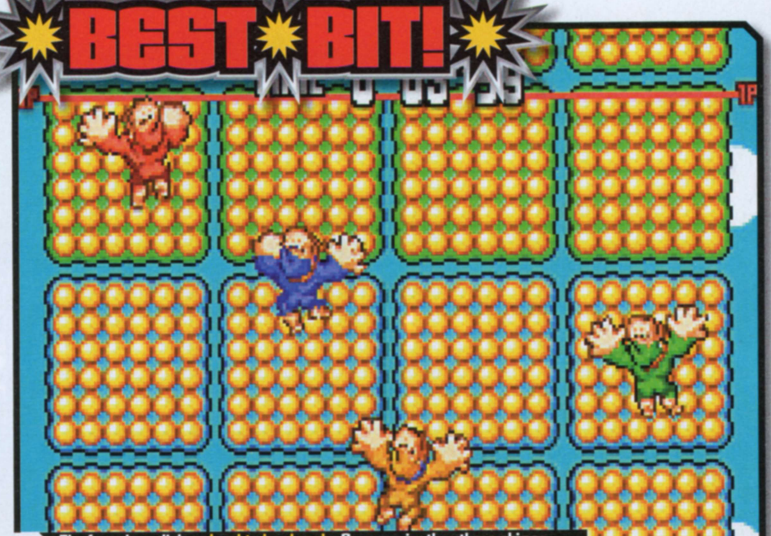
"NINTENDO HAVE COME UP WITH THE MOST INNOVATIVE PLATFORMER OF THE YEAR"

Later levels can be, ahem, a veritable minefield. Sorry.



Lazy old Kong spends most of this game just hangin' around.

BEST BIT!



The four-player link up head-to-head mode. Even crazier than those chimps from the classic PG Tips TV ads!

UNLEASH THE BEAST WITHIN

Wendigo

Weretiger

Merman

Grizzly

Minotaur

Werewolf

12+
www.pegi.info

OUT 18th FEBRUARY

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SEGA
www.sega.co.uk

• OUT: 4TH MARCH • FORMAT: XB • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: ODDWORLD
• PUBLISHER: EA • ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • CONTACT: 01932 450000 • PLAYERS: 1

WHAT IS IT?

The latest incarnation of the *Oddworld* saga, *Stranger's Wrath* takes the series in a radical new direction.

- A cross between a first- and third-person shooter
- Hunt your ammunition!

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: Accept missions from the chicken dudes. Locate your prey and either capture or kill them. It's your choice.

ODDWORLD: STRANGER'S WRATH

Odd? Undoubtedly. Magnificent? Truly!

Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee was one of the few disappointments of the Xbox's launch. Given the classic status of the PlayStation versions, we were expecting more of the same, only to be lumped with yet another uninspired 3D platformer, whose numerous flaws were painfully exposed by superior series such as *Ratchet & Clank*.

But nearly three years on, the *Oddworld* franchise has emerged, phoenix-like from the flames. It has taken the series in a completely new direction. And we love it.

Oddworld: Stranger's Wrath, oddly enough, stars the Stranger – a bounty hunter roaming the backwaters of Oddworld in search of moolah, and he doesn't care who he has to cross to earn it. He's so darn tough he'd make fellow Western badass Clint Eastwood run screaming for the hills. Stranger's also hiding a dark secret, but he's not going to stay in the closet for long if head villain Sekto has anything to do with it. We don't want to spoil the surprise, so let's

TOWN TIME

You'll stumble upon three main shops in each of the locations featured in *Stranger's Wrath*, each with their own advantages.

The Bounty Store: Find out the local goss about your latest targets in here.

The General Store: Stranger can purchase a range of cool stuff here, including ammo.

The Doc: A medical blokey the Stranger has some mysteriously pressing business with.

BOSSY BUGGERS

The boss fights in *Stranger's Wrath* are frequently ingenious, almost as good – and tough! – as those found in *Metroid Prime*. You'll die. A lot. Here are a few of our faves...

Jo' Mamma: A nasty old battle axe with sons for bodyguards. Kill her brood then go take her out!

Meagly McGraw: This guy likes his opples, so much that's he's taken over the farm!

Pack Rat Palooka: This wuss hides behind a huge shield generator. Bring it – and him – down!

LETHAL WEAPON 5: NATURE'S REVENGE

Oddworld has certainly pledged its claim for the craziest weapons system of all time, as you can see below. Chances are that if Stranger finds it, he will shoot it without a second thought. We wonder what the World Wildlife Fund would have to say about all this?

Zappflies: Your staple weapon. Charge 'em up and fire!

Stunks: Incapacitate a group of thugs Pepe Le'Peu stylee.

Chippunks: Distract enemies with these chopsy li'l critters.

Boombats: These are the *Oddworld* equivalent of a rocket launchers.

Bolamites: Arachnid helpers that entangle foes in sticky webbing.

Fuzzles: Furballs with razor sharp teeth. Lay traps with them.

Thudslug: Knock bosses out with these to collect a full bounty.

Stingbees: Machine guns with nasty barbs. Leave well alone if you've got any sense.

HOME ON THE (FREE) RANGE

Clackers are versatile creatures. You can befriend the yolk folk, pump them for info, listen to their sarcastic put-downs or simply beat seven shades of crap out of them.

Chat to the fellas for a while and chuckle at their comments. Then shoot them.

Push the intimidation too far and they'll leg it to the nearest safe house before pounding you with cannon.

You'll hear them muttering lines like "It's boring inside – we're comin' out now", and all will be forgiven.

NORSE CODE

Later on in the game, when Stranger's enigmatic past is revealed, our hero gets the chance to don some natty new duds, as well as acquire some pumped-up weaponry. Out goes the cowboy look and in comes Norse getup. Nice!

All dressed up and nowhere to go, check out Stranger now! Just don't ask where Donner and Blitzen are or you're liable to get slapped.

A single press on the R Trigger sends Stranger into a devastating cross-screen charge attack. Your stamina will fall, but so will the bad guys.

GRAB MY ROD

Oddworld is a game with a sense of humour to die for – literally. This brings a whole new meaning to the warning 'No fishing'!

"STRANGER'S HIDING A DARK SECRET, BUT HE'S NOT GOING TO STAY IN THE CLOSET FOR LONG"

just say that four legs aren't necessarily better than two...

Within minutes of playing *Stranger's Wrath* it's obvious that *Oddworld* have pioneered a wonderfully intuitive system. It effortlessly mixes the first-person shooter and third-person platformer in a way no game has attempted before.

STRANGER DANGER

You'll do most of your hunting in the first person, since that's the only time you can use your precious crossbow. Press on the right analogue stick, though, and you'll switch to third-person. This is where Stranger's melee attacks take on a much more vicious nature, adding a further layer of strategy, as you can save ammo by fighting enemies with your bare fists.

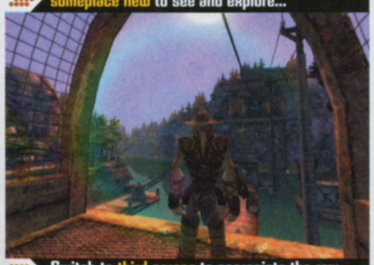
The meat of the game lies in the town's bounty stores, where you'll get to choose which no good varmint you want to track down next. So, although at heart *Stranger's Wrath* is undeniably linear, it's presented in a cunning way that allows you to choose your missions in whatever order takes your fancy.

STAYIN' ALIVE

In another smart touch, almost every enemy – boss or minion – can either be killed outright or captured, the twist being that enemies are generally worth far more bounty alive than dead. This encourages you to neutralise foes rather than sending them to a bloody death. Concerned Mothers and pacifists everywhere can breath a sigh of relief!

In between missions you'll meet some of the most charming comic creations this side of *The Simpsons*. Take, for instance, the Clackers – benign little bald chicken-like creatures with a razor sharp sense of humour. They're all loaded with tons of dialogue, some helpful, most not –

In *Stranger's Wrath*, there's always someplace new to see and explore...



Switch to third-person to appreciate the raw beauty of *Oddworld's* creation.

HEADS UP, STRANGER

Stranger's Wrath is a very simple game to pick up and play, but both its health and weapons systems make for some surprisingly strategic gameplay in amongst all the action. Intrigued? Read on...

HEALTH BAR

This goes down with amazing regularity since the game is ROCK at times.

STAMINA BAR

Use it regularly to recharge Stranger's batteries but watch out you don't run out of steam!

THE RADAR

The red dots are guys who've seen you, the yellow ones haven't. Duh.

YOUR WEAPONS

Two different types can be loaded at once. We suggest Thudslugs and Boombats for maximum carnage.

I SEE YA BABY, SHAKIN' THAT ASS

In a further stab at innovation, *Oddworld* have done away with the bog-standard FPS method of replenishing health via infeasibility located medikits. It's a clever idea that works really well, although at times you go mental trying to find somewhere sneaky to hide while Stranger recovers his strength.

Get shot up. Luckily, Stranger has a stamina bar lurking just below his health meter.

Holding down Y makes the stamina bar deplete while at the same time replenishing health.

The trade-off if that you have to stand still for this to occur, so take cover beforehand.

Stamina constantly recovers so the system works well, as it encourages strategic thinking.

GET THE DOC

Oops. That is The Doc. True to form, *Oddworld* is not an all-out cutesy fest and some of its darker moments will leave a nasty taste in your mouth.

but almost everything they have to say will make you chuckle. Even Stranger's enemies are full of smart Alec comments, with some of the bosses being particularly acid-tongued.

Stranger's Wrath's weapons system will certainly get heads a' turnin'. Throwing the traditional FPS weapons system right out of the window, the developers have replaced it with the very *Oddworld*-esque notion of live ammo. Yep, in *Stranger's Wrath* you actually have to hunt your ammunition. No wildlife is safe from Stranger as he rounds up a selection of insects and mammals to fire. Varmints such as the Chippunks even chip in with smartass quips in the middle of a firefight. We be lying if we said the hunting for your ammo concept didn't begin to get on our nerves after a time, but it's all so jolly humorous and good natured only the most cynical gamers will turn their noses up.

Production-wise, *Oddworld* have got things spot on, as per usual. *Stranger's Wrath* is dripping with charm and conjures up a living, breathing world chock full of memorable characters. From the initial Western theme, with its canyons and dust storms, to later levels resplendent with stunning waterfalls and airships bombarding the crap out of poor Stranger and his pals, *Stranger's Wrath* is a visual masterpiece. If ever a franchise could make the leap to big screen success and roundly wipe the floor with Hollywood's CGI pap, this is surely it. Even the voice acting is first class; Vin Diesel's teeth would chatter before the Stranger's deep rumbling baritone.

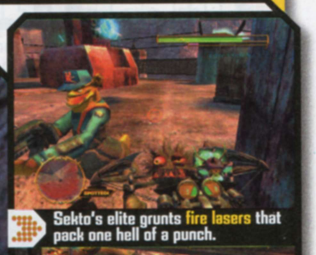
LIFE, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT

These enemies are anything but bog-standard, and can kill Stranger in a flash if you let your guard down...

Machine gunners take Stranger down in seconds, so find cover.

These giants, sporting bone helmets, like to claw you up close.

Kamikaze thugs take no prisoners and can send Stranger to a fiery grave unless you get them first, so be on your wits.



Sekto's elite grunts fire lasers that pack one hell of a punch.

Toasty! Avoid flamers if you value your skin.

CHARM OFFENSIVE

Call us nitpickers, but the game is not quite perfect. Completing mission after mission can drag at times, and some gamers might give up on it after a less than brilliant opening hour. The difficulty is also pitched at an insane level at times – thank Abe for the quick save function!

"STRANGERS WORLD IS DRIPPING WITH CHARM AND CONJURES UP A BREATHING WORLD"

JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES, MASTER OF... ?

So is this piece of magic a shooter, platformer, or RPG? Well, it's all of them rolled into one really – a breath of fresh air to the FPS genre. Here is a selection of a few of our favourite screens to prove how innovative Stranger's Wrath really is...

Swing your arms about and mash vegetation into a tasty salad.

Ride in rickety mine carts Indiana Jones-style. Fortune and glory kid!

Ride in a rowing boat and try to stop airships committing genocide.

"Go on punk, make my day". Actually, that was Dirty Harry.

Go exploring in the woods and chance upon dirty great monoliths!

Do a Mystic Meg impression with the help of the Fortune Teller.

Dress up like Thor and you'll really impress your freaky amphibian mates.

Hang from bits of rope looking cool while admiring the beautiful scenery.

KINDA MAGIC

Stranger's Wrath contains some dark overtones to go with its more blatant comedy elements. But you don't want to know about those! So here's one of our favourite scenes from early on in the game.

These two enemy grunts are bickering about which button to press. Is it green or blue?

Amidst much disagreement, they decide to plump for the green one.

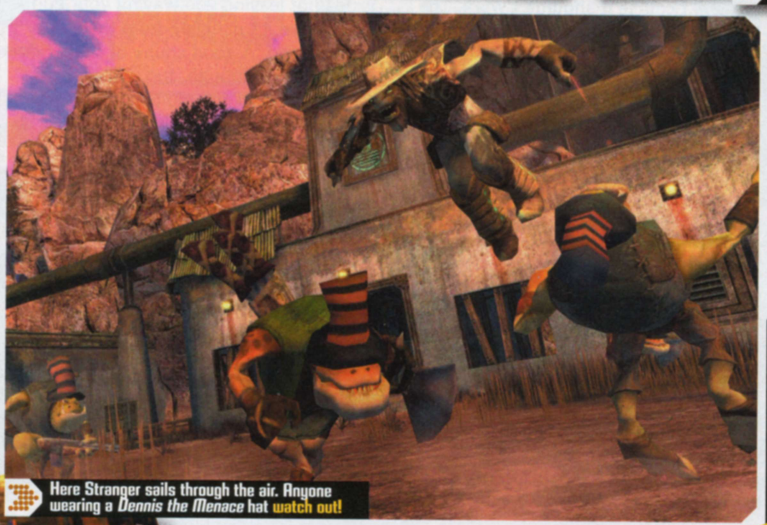
Boom! Wrong choice. That's two baddies Stranger won't be bringing in alive.

SHIVER ME TIMBERS!

Later on in the game, Stranger is given this Norse longboat to ride around in. Cue some majestic visuals...

Stranger first has to manoeuvre his ride out of this glistening cave. Check out the snazzy reflections!

A vista that wouldn't look out of place in a *Grizzly Adams* caper. Look - it's Yogi bear!



Here Stranger sails through the air. Anyone wearing a *Dennis the Menace* hat watch out!

DEAD RINGER

We don't care what anyone says – this broad is the dead spit of Lisa Simpson. Check out the damning evidence!

It's also a pain when the game automatically flicks back to third-person when Stranger captures a bounty, since during mid-fight you'll often get disoriented. The damage you take whilst fumbling to change back to first-person seems a little unfair. But these are only minor quibbles.

Overall, though – the odd small flaw aside – *Stranger's Wrath* is an utter triumph and a timely return to form by those mad geniuses at *Oddworld*. They have taken a long hard look at the FPS genre, shaken it about a bit and given it a hefty slap or two. The result is a truly original title floating amid a sea of staleness, and one no self-respecting Xbox owner should go without. It might not be the most fashionable title around but go out and buy it now - or we'll send the Fuzzles after you. GM

FEATURING! Eight types of live ammo

BEST BIT!

Although we don't want to spoil things, suffice to say there's a big plot twist halfway through the game that shakes things up quite considerably.

See that big engine next to the bad guys? Shoot it and watch the result...

"I wanna be a part of it, New-Yolk... Neeeww Yolk!"

Other Formats

The closest alternative on your format:

PC Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus 86%
PSone Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee 89%

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GM LOVES

+ The unique spectacle that is the *Oddworld* universe
+ Witty dialogue perfectly delivered by the game's voice talent
+ Shooting Stunks into a bunch of enemies

GM HATES

- The 'bounty' mission structure grates after a time
- Having to hunt your ammo can be annoying
- Who is Stranger and what has he done with Abe?

GRAPHICS 92%

Initially bland, but once you reach New Yolk City your jaw will be droppin'.

GAMEPLAY 91%

Outrageously innovative missions that always seem fresh. Redefines the genre.

LIFESPAN 81%

No multi-player which is a pity, although it's pretty darn tough in places.

OVERALL

89%

The most original game we've played in yonks. *Oddworld* is back with an atomic-sized belch.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: Goldeneye: Rogue Agent, 60%
WORSE THAN: ..... Halo 2, 95%
WAIT FOR: ..... Call of Cthulhu: Dark Corners of the Earth, Q1
BEST PRICE: ..... £32.99, amazon.co.uk

REVIEW

OUT: MARCH • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99
DEVELOPER: CRYSTAL DYNAMICS • PUBLISHER: EIDOS • ONLINE: MULTI-PLAYER • SPECIAL: SURROUND SOUND
OTHER FORMATS: XB, PC • CONTACT: WWW.PROJECTSNOWBLIND.COM • PLAYERS: 1-16

WHAT IS IT?

Snowblind is an first-person shooter that's slim on deep storylines but strong on special powers and shooting things loads.

- Originally thought to be a deathmatch shooter based on the Deus Ex universe

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: Spark up your most cherished bio-mod, cuddle your weapon of choice, and knock everyone flat. Then jump in a car and drive back and forth over their prone bodies to stop them getting into heaven.

MOD SQUAD

The thermal implant looks more like night vision, but reveals the heat signatures of enemies through walls and barriers.

You can give your nervous system a jolt, slowing the world down to a crawl and allowing you to breakdance between bullets.

Your ballistic shield is invaluable, making enemy bullets ping off your body like peas off a trampoline.

SNOWBLIND

It's anything but *Deus Ex*'s ginger stepchild...

Of course it shouldn't work. The *Deus Ex* games, in the eyes of many, are held in holy regard for being as much about intelligence and strategy as shooting people in the mouth with grenades. And along comes *Project: Snowblind*, a cynical attempt to shoehorn the thinking man's FPS into the shoot first, ASK NO QUESTIONS LATER MOTHER F**R mentality of the modern-day console action game. But it does work. So finely, in fact, as to be one of the best FPS titles on the PS2.**

First up, it controls beautifully, managing to even tame the PS2's slack analogue sticks. So aiming feels precise, instead of leaving you waving your gun around like it's dangling from the end of a fishing rod. A good chunk of *Deus Ex*'s ideas make it through, too. Bio-mods, remote bot hacking, multiple routes for conquering a situation are still there, making for a package that's not as throwaway as it first seems.

SMILE! Mr Frost – bullet cushion.

LET IT SNOW

Interesting weapons, tight gunplay, reliable squad AI, plenty of dishy graphics – this is excellent stuff, although a little too short. The stealth aspect does feel a little wonky, meaning that while you can choose your angle of approach, you won't be able to do it as quietly as you'd like. And *Snowblind* would have done well to pilfer *Halo*'s energy system. But what could have ended up as the watered-down slop of *Deus Ex*'s leftovers has turned out to be a souped-up brew of fast-moving, impressive action with pleasurable power-ups. Lovely. Even if *Deus Ex* isn't proud of *Snowblind*, we certainly are.

"SNOWBLIND HAS TURNED OUT TO BE A SOUPED UP BREW OF IMPRESSIVE ACTION"

BEST BIT!

The Icepick tool allows you to override the bots. Ice a security drone, and jack into its mainframe...

...giving you control over its firepower, while you sit in the corner laughing into your hand.

Other Formats

The closest alternatives on your format:

PC	Half-Life 2	96%
CUBE	TimeSplitters 2	93%
XBOX	Deus Ex: Invisible War	92%

HITMAN AND HURT

There's more than one way to skin a cat, sure, but a grenade's no bloody use, is it? If you just wanted to stop the cat from shooting at you, however, then *Project: Snowblind* is the game for you...

Your weedy pistol can fire super charge, if you're desperate.

Snowblind has a variation of the Gravity Gun – the Kinetic Kicker.

The shotgun's secondary fire covers enemies in explosive shards.

You can even drive cars, for the ultimate in unfair melee combat.

Mini-gun emplacements can be used to murderous effect.

Grenades are brilliant. Tap once to throw, and again to detonate them.

GM JUDGEMENT

STEVE

GM LOVES

+ The smooth and sharp aiming system, a rarity among PS2 shooters
+ The multiple firing modes of each weapon. A shotgun that doubles up as a shrapnel cannon? Mother!

GM HATES

- How stealth isn't *really* a core part of the gameplay
- Having to pick up medikits. *Halo*'s energy system has now made this illegal.

GRAPHICS 88%

There's lots of detail and some lovely use of strong, blurry colours.

GAMEPLAY 94%

You can approach the action how you like – provided you like action.

LIFESPAN 86%

Short but sweet one-player mode, but there's a hefty online portion, too.

OVERALL

88%

Better than *Hillzone*, but not up there with the Xbox heavyweights, it's an FPS that's worth some loving.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN:... Call of Duty: Finest Hour, 81%
WORSE THAN:..... Halo 2, 95%
BEST PRICE:..... £31.99, play.com

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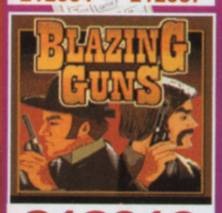

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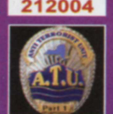

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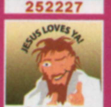

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Wizards of the Coast

Hasbro

• OUT: 25TH FEBRUARY • FORMAT: PC • PRICE: £29.99 • DEVELOPER: SIMBIN • PUBLISHER: ATARI
• ONLINE: YES • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.GTR-GAME.COM • PLAYERS: 1 - 24

GTR

Realism: just as much fun as fantasy...

Everyone should maintain a list of official 'hard things'. Patting your head and rubbing your tummy. Calculus. Tick Tock Clock in *Super Mario 64*. Diamonds. Add to your list taking any corner in *GTR*, the most demanding driving simulations you're ever likely to play. It's based around the FIA GTR championship, a kind of low-rent Formula One, where the cars have actual roofs and doors. Don't expect anything approaching the arcade thrills of *Burnout 3*, or even the quiet refinement of *Project Gotham*. This is hard. Hard with a capital HARD.

Hard in that 50 highly aggressive drivers block your way to the podium, and for the first hour you'll have problems taking a corner at half the speed you're expecting. Hard in that even applying too much gas at the wrong time will see you gorging deep black doughnuts into the asphalt. Apply to little, and you'll just coast, missing the corner, and spinning out into the gravel pit. Your first hours are likely to be a little bit embarrassing. Best played alone, where no one will see your mistakes.

DRIVE TIME

But eventually you get it, and the majesty of the simulation becomes clear. Completing hard tasks is immensely rewarding, like Calculus, Tick Tock Clock and diamonds. Completing a lap of *Monza*, at speed, without falling off the sides of the track, imbues you with the a sense of accomplishment. Stick with *GTR*; your efforts will be rewarded. GM

DASH TEAM

PC CD

GTR has even got a semi useable in-car view that gives you a decent look at the road and a detailed dashboard.

DRIVING AIDS

If you can't face the professional level, there is an arcade option. It chooses the right gears for each corner, to help you manage the bends.

BEST BIT!

It's so realistic you can even drive out from the pits and complete the practice stages.

Before the race begins, the entire pack follows a pace car in a formation lap.

JUDGEMENT

TIM

GRAPHICS 78%
The tracks aren't as detailed as we expected, but the cars are gorgeous.

GAMEPLAY 88%
If like simulations, this is as real as you want it to be.

LIFESPAN 85%
It will take months of practice to feel comfortable on the road.

OVERALL

80%

An extraordinary simulation, and an extraordinarily difficult game. *GTR* is a very scary prospect.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..Indy Car Racing '05, 71%
WORSE THAN: ..... Project Gotham 2, 90%
WAIT FOR: ..... Gran Turismo 4, 11th March
BEST PRICE: ..... £26.99, Gameplay

• OUT: 11TH MARCH • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £29.99 • DEVELOPER: NEON STUDIOS • PUBLISHER: JOWOOD
• ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.JOWOOD.COM • PLAYERS: 1

LEGEND OF KAY

Look, it's not a *Zelda* spin off, 'kay?

Legend of Kay, infused with Eastern promise, is a feline homage to the ancient martial arts flicks we all know and love.

The evil Emperor Shun and his army of apes invade Kay's homeland – an island inhabited by peaceful animals. Our wannabe ninja sets out to find Shun's volcanic fortress and kick simian arse.

Okay, so *Legend of Kay* is not wholly original, but the cute story is fleshed out with gorgeous comic strip interludes. One of the first things you'll notice about *Kay* is that it does the simple things right.

CAT FIGHT

Kay controls perfectly, and it's refreshing to see a game where key platforming elements such as jumping, swimming and swinging from ropes are kept nice and simple. The sword fighting combat is intuitive and satisfying, even though Kay learns enough moves throughout his quest to confuse Bruce Lee! You'll need them for the HUGE bosses you meet.

Legend of Kay's major problem lies with its competition, with the likes of *Jak 3* and *Ratchet & Clank 3* having upped the platforming bar several notches in recent months. *Kay*, on the other hand, harks back to the golden days of the genre and, despite its charms, still feels a touch dated.

While Kay is not *quite* legendary, it's as slick and satisfying a platformer as you'll play all year. Miaow! GM

Hammer time! Like a true feline, Kay despises those icky rats.

CHI TIME

By whacking zhongs (ancient statues) and enemies, you build up chi that turns Kay into a veritable whirling dervish. Waste!

BEST BIT!

The evil rats have placed an enchanted talisman around Boarax's neck and turned him evil, forcing Kay to kick his arse.

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GRAPHICS 81%
Cutesy artwork tastier than a saucer of full fat milk.

GAMEPLAY 82%
There's loads of fun stuff to do. We especially dig boar racing!

LIFESPAN 80%
You'll hardly paws for breath as you get through the exciting levels.

OVERALL

80%

More prized Persian than scabby moggy, *Legend of Kay* is one of the best platformers we've played in ages.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Samurai Jack, 54%
WORSE THAN: ....Ratchet & Clank 3, 90%
WAIT FOR: ..... Psychonauts, 25th February
BEST PRICE: ..... £24.99, play.com

REVIEW

OUT: MARCH (NOW IN JP/US) • FORMAT: GC • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: CAPCOM
PUBLISHER: CAPCOM • ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: PS2, XB • CALL: 020 8846 2550 • PLAYERS: 1

WHAT IS IT?

The tired and testing *Resi* formula gets the mother of all makeovers as *Resi 2* hero Leon Kennedy goes mental in Spain.

- Three playable characters
- Unlockable Mercenaries game

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: The *Resi* chainsaw with ignition module and primer bulb and choke for quick starting. Also with a single anti-vibration handle.

RESIDENT EVIL 4

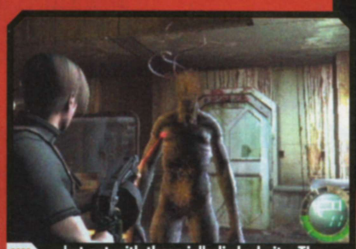
Resi gets a T-virus style transformation...

15

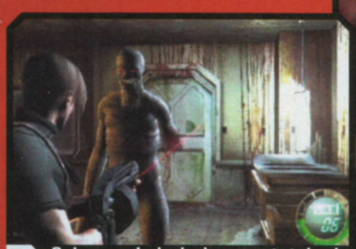
REGROWTH

Just when you think you can handle anything the game throws at you, up pop the Regenerators. You can blast their arms, legs and heads off but they just grow back. And what's even worse, they laugh at you while you flounder.

Okay, here comes a bad guy. Surely a shotgun shell to the face should suffice...



...but not with these jelly-limbed gits. The head grows back and they continue laughing.



And now you're back where you started, only you're one shell down and he's closer.

IT AIN'T JUST THE VILLAGE PEOPLE

There are three main areas to the game – the village, the castle and a military camp. This means there's a variety of folk that need putting out of the misery. Many of them wears hats... as if that's going help.

Here's your typical villager: shabbily dressed and too curious for his own good.

When you get to the castle you're faced by Illuminados Priests who also push their luck.

Once your on the second disc you face a parasitic Territorial Army wearing camo chic.

Resi had to change. Despite peaking with the remake on the GameCube, it was beginning to look dated and tired compared to so many other action games that were over eager to please. *Resi* was always about making you work, making you wait, making you find five animal emblems then place them in an ornately carved bookcase. For gamers more accustomed to driving nitro-fuelled cars and shooting gangsters, it all seemed a bit lethargic. And the last in the series, *Resi 0*, was so lethargic it might as well had its feet up in front of the telly, with its belt open, rubbing its belly.

But as 'change' is often treated by many with as much suspicion as a scally in Dixons, you've got to admire Capcom's balls. They've taken one of the most dearly loved gaming series of all time, one that defined survival horror for the last 10 years... and then turned it into *Space Invaders*.

GUN-DE-MENTAL

This is a game that relies more on guns than US Foreign Policy does. Can't do a puzzle? Shoot it. Can't hit a lever? Shoot it. Can't open a door? Shoot it. Strange creature in your way, something stuck in a machine, crow annoying you – then just pop a cap in it. It should be an advert for the National Rifle Association – just squeeze the trigger of your 9mm and all your problems disappear.

All you've probably seen of *Resi 4* up to now is our hero Leon shooting seemingly normal villagers who cue up to look menacing, then take one in the face. Well, that's because it's the main core of the game – 80 percent of your time is spent taming the Countryside Alliance. The game leads you through narrow paths and funnels bad things in your direction which must be punished with a gun – presumably for being evil. This means you could mistake Capcom's new *Resi* as being one dimensional, linear, gratuitous and repetitive. However, its better to describe *Resi Evil 4* as one the best videogames we've played.

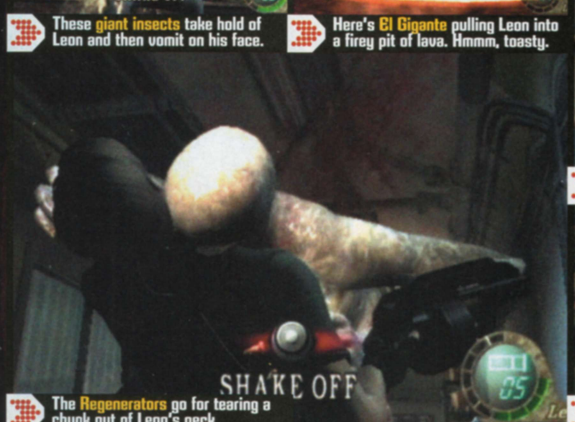
It seems as if Capcom have grown tired of making games with quaint rendered backgrounds and endearing door loading screens, and instead have gone absolutely mental.

GOING OUT IN STYLE

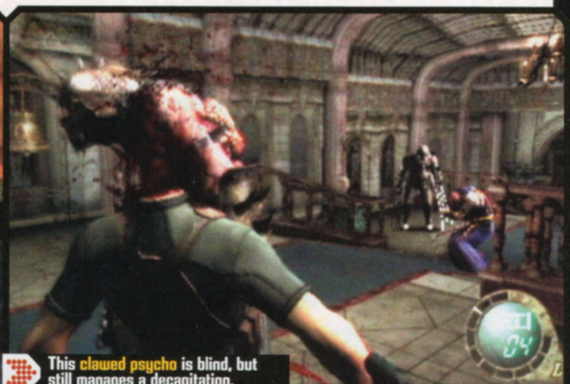
Most people would like to pass away peacefully, preferably in their sleep and at a ripe old age. Leon Kennedy however, seems to prefer a more dramatic shuffle off the mortal coil, usually involving some important body part being severed off.

These giant insects take hold of Leon and then vomit on his face.

Here's El Gigante pulling Leon into a firey pit of lava. Hmmm, toasty.



The Regenerators go for tearing a chunk out of Leon's neck.



This clawed psycho is blind, but still manages a decapitation.

This infected soldier was hiding in a oven. Now that's dedication.

And if the monsters don't get you, a half naked super soldier will.

PORTRAIT-ORS

This is Luis Sera. You find him in a cupboard and despite helping him out of that predicament, he isn't forthcoming with info.

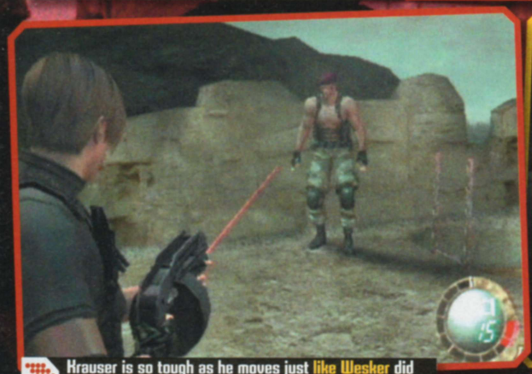
This is Ramon Salazar. Thinks he's the big man, but in fact he's very, very small. He dressed like Cervantes from *Soul Calibur*.

Here's Lord Saddler who's responsible for the mad monks in *Resi 4*. Really fancies himself and paints his fingernails...

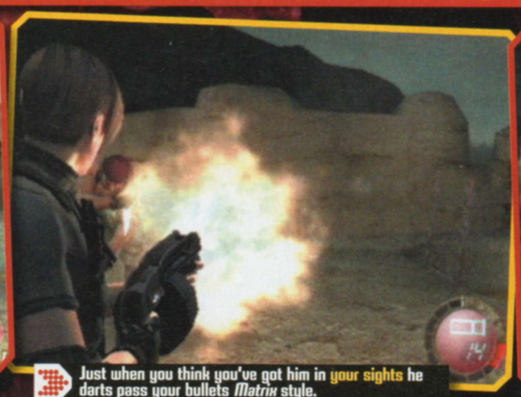
Look familiar? Well it's Ada Wong from *Resi 2*! Her job is to turn up, look sexy, flirt with Leon and then grapple hook off again.

HALLE BERET

This strapping action hero is Krauser and he's one mean dude. Inevitably Leon has to teach him some manners, which results in one of the best boss battles of the whole *Resi* series. Incredibly tense, as tough as fire, but beautiful to look at.



Krauser is so tough as he moves just like Wesker did in *Code: Veronica X*. And that's no coincidence.



Just when you think you've got him in your sights he darts pass your bullets *Matrix* style.

Then as you take time to reload he zips right into your face and tries to peel it off with a combat knife.

GO TRIGGER

There are puzzles in *Resi 4* but they're all fairly straightforward and require very little exploration.

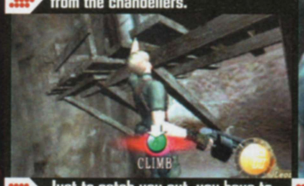
Most of the time the solution is right in front of you. Try shooting something.

Why are all booby-trapped descending ceilings spiked? Isn't being crushed enough?

A IS FOR ACTION

The game is full of tests of your reflexes – they're like the Real Time Action bits in *Shenmue*.

Like Errol Flynn, Leon can swing from the chandeliers.



Just to catch you out, you have to hammer A to drag yourself up.

Resident has always had amazing cutscences. In *Resi 4*, they're given an extra dimension thanks to these reflex tests, making sure you're paying attention.

The shoulder buttons also come into play, especially in the boss battles.

Snapping L and R together allows you to avoid otherwise fatal attacks.

"THIS IS A GAME THAT RELIES MORE ON GUNS THAN US FOREIGN POLICY DOES"

In the old *Resi* you would approach a room, endure the door-in-space loading screen, then tentatively edge forward hoping that the next fixed camera angle will reveal just what is making the groaning noise: In the new *Resi* you kick open the door, bomb through, immediately get to identify what's making the groaning noise, shoot it in the face a few times then scissor kick its head off. And that, my friends, is entertainment – hideously violent, beautifully realised, super-satisfying entertainment.

It all starts off so low key, though, with us being re-acquainted with Leon who last saw in *Resident Evil 2*. In the six years since then he's joined the Secret Service and been sent to rural Spain to search for the US President's daughter, Ashley, who's been kidnapped. The investigation takes him to a tiny village where the inhabitants are in a trance like state, one which they immediately snap out of as soon as they see Leon. Once he's in sight, they've got farm tools to throw and lynching that needs doing. It's at this point that the fun starts and never stops.

Resi used to be a game of puzzles and exploration, now it's similar to another Capcom game, *Onimusha*. *Onimusha* was continuous hacking and slashing, which never became tiresome – it was special every time you connected with your weapon. The combination of the sound effects, the weighting of the blade and the way the enemies recoiled from being hit was just so satisfying. Well, it's the same in *Resi 4*; whatever the weapon, whatever the target, as soon as you hear the ring of the shot, see the recoil of the

AN INTERVIEW WITH HIROYUKI KOBAYASHI

We were fortunate enough to visit Capcom (in Osaka!) and meet the men responsible for this incredible game, then get to sit down and talk with Kobayashi-san, the Producer of *Resi 4*. Great man, he's a great, great man.

Q: *Resident Evil 4* is vastly different to previous games in the series. Why did you decide to change the traditional formula?

A: The reason we decided to change *Resident Evil* was simple; whenever a game reaches its fourth instalment, players start to get bored. We knew we couldn't just add new weapons or characters – that wouldn't have cut it. Instead, we had to rethink the formula that made the game successful internationally. So we rebuilt *Resident Evil* from the ground up, trying to make a game that would shock – or rather excite – players in the same way that the original game did all those years ago.

Q: Was there any pressure from *Resident Evil* fans to change the game, or was it an in-house decision?

A: It was purely an internal decision at Capcom. We looked at the game and realised that we'd been doing the same thing for a long time, and it obviously wasn't enough any more. We had to totally rethink our strategy and rework the formula again.

Q: In the classic *Resident Evil* games, many of the scares came from the fact that – because of the fixed camera angles – you couldn't see what was around the next corner. As *Resident Evil 4* is fully 3D, was it harder to make the game scary?

A: This was something we thought about a lot, and we knew we had to move in a different direction because the camera angles were no longer fixed. However, we didn't have to move away from the traditional *Resident Evil* scares 100 percent. When you reach the castle, for example, you'll end up in some cramped spaces and tight corridors, and most of the time you'll be turning corners without knowing what you'll bump into. That said, the game has obviously become a more action-focused experience, and this time the horror aspect comes from the fact that your enemies that can attack you from *any* direction, from *any* side. Now you'll hear voices and you won't know whether they're in front of you, to the right, to the left... your enemies could be coming from *all* directions. Not knowing exactly where your attackers are creates a tenser, more pressurised atmosphere than in previous *Resident Evil* games.

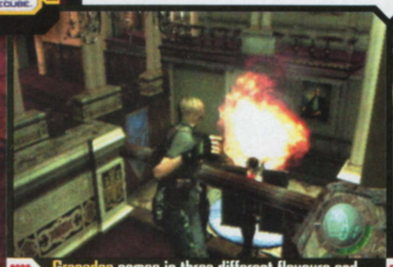
Q: When developing *Resident Evil* games, do you have any systems in place to test if the games really are scary?

A: Occasionally we will bring in a *Resident Evil* newbie – someone who doesn't know anything about the series, or doesn't know anything about the particular game we're working on – and just put them to work to see if they're scared. We look at how much they jump, how excited they get, and seeing how an Average Joe reacts is definitely the best way to test the scares.

Q: Was there anything that you didn't have time to implement in *Resident Evil 4* that may pop up in the next game?

THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR THE JOB

You've got so many weapons in the *Resi 4* there are often times that you're spoilt for choice as to which one to use. Each has its particular strengths though, which allows you to be extra creative with your particularly brutal brand of exorcism.



Grenades comes in three different flavours and are best for big groups or stationary targets.

There's three different shotguns; each one is perfect for sending a mad monk flying.

There are several handguns to collect, each one is ideal for targeting specific body parts.

The Magnum is not only powerful, it's got the best loading animation in the world, ever.

gun and the victim snap back in pain something happens in your brain. It's as if there's a small fireworks display in your cranium, followed by a magical trickle of nerve endings dancing with pleasure flowing down your shoulders.

If your shot happens to result in an exploding head, you'll witness a different sensation. Your buttons will clench so tight you'll be propelled off your seat, allowing you to punch the air in slo-mo, like the hero at the end of an '80s high school film. Basically, whenever you've got something to shoot it's like a big birthday party.

The only time this assault on anything moving ceases is when the magic A button comes into play. It's only used in context sensitive situation but triggers a multitude of marvellous actions: jump down, climb up, catch, cut, sprint, jump, kick, inspect, pick up, use, winch, pull, open, zip line – it's an endless list of surprises. Then there's shoulder buttons that can be pressed simultaneously to avoid giant boulders, trees wielded by ogres, swords, tentacles, falling pillars. It's a simple system but enables cutscenes to be interactive, keeps players continually on edge and allows Leon to move like no other *Resi* character has been able to.

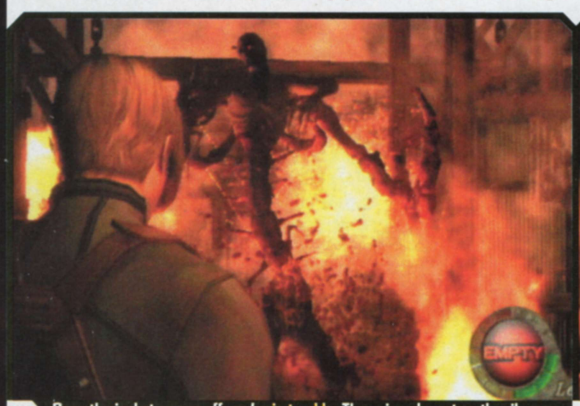
HIDEOUS SLINKY

And watching Leon move is a pure delight, because *Resi 4*'s presentation is peerless. The game drags you through forest, mines, sewers, castles, laboratories – each having its own distinct feel thanks to an incredible attention to detail. So heat haze effects, mist and acoustics are all appropriately used. It's so lived-in, so natural, you'd have thought it was grown and harvested rather than programmed. Then there's the animation – just Leon reloading a gun is an event in itself. And the bosses! Sweet Shinji! You have never seen bosses likes *Resi 4*'s. They pulse mutate, squirm and contort with such warped grace it's worth watching them take you apart just to see what they're capable of.

Another major factor in the *Resi*'s success is the pacing of the game – you are never stationary, never stuck for something to do. In between the jaw-dropping boss battles and the action

CHIEF SITTING-DUCK

Remember the Village Chief? He was large, wore a big coat and had a beard – you couldn't miss him. Well, his name is Bitores Mendez and he's got a very good reason for wearing a long coat. You really don't want him flashing.



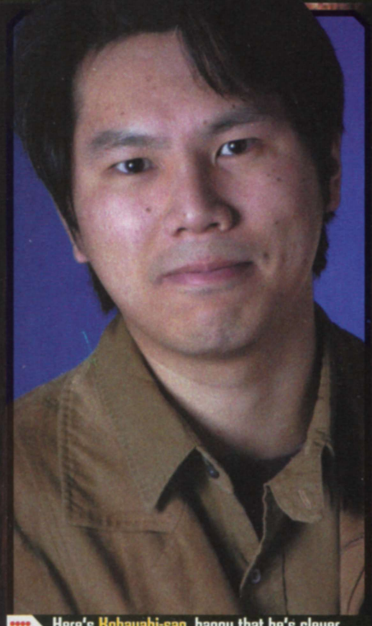
Once the jacket comes off you're in trouble. The spine elongates, the rib cage shatters and he becomes extremely hard to look at. And very dangerous.

But then things get worse as Chief Kegwin's legs snap off and he starts swinging around the rafters like the ugliest chimp imaginable.

FIGURINES!

Throughout the game there are shooting galleries where you can test your skills. If you successfully pass one of the challenges you'll be rewarded with a figurine of one of the characters from the game.

AN INTERVIEW WITH HIROYUKI KOBAYASHI



Here's Kobayahi-san, happy that he's clever, successful and really good at making games.

A: As a developer, you *never* get the chance to include everything that you want to because there's always a balance between delivering the product on time and making the game the best you can. That said, *Resident Evil 4* is a 20+ hour game, and there's only a handful of things that we wanted to include but couldn't. From a research and development perspective, the game is very complete.

Q: The *Resident Evil* series has inspired a host of imitators. What qualities keep your series ahead of its survival horror rivals?

A: I'd say it's probably the level of polish and quality we bring to the series. In terms of action and horror, we've always worked hard to push those aspects to the max. Then, on top of that, we threw in the deep conspiracy story of the Umbrella Corporation in the old *Resident Evil* games. So we always had an interesting back-story in addition to a nicely made action game. In our opinion, this kept *Resident Evil* one step ahead of other horror titles.

Q: Was *Resident Evil 4* directly inspired by any horror movies, Asian, Western or European? And what are your favourite horror movies?

A: My inspirations come from many different places, not just movies. Films play a huge part, though, from the George A. Romero movies such as *Dawn Of The Dead* to totally non-zombie related films. If you think about all the movies you've seen in your life, there are many set-pieces that you can spot in the *Resident Evil* series; there are many aspects taken from the *Alien* movies, for example. Just because *Resident Evil* is about zombies doesn't mean that it's only based on zombie movies. As far as horror movies are concerned, my personal favourite would probably be the *Dawn Of The Dead* remake – I think that was very well done, especially as it was based on such a classic. Personally, I probably like sci-fi movies more than horror films, and I still love the *Alien* series – they've given me great inspiration and, if you look hard, you'll spot many parts of those movies in my games.

Q: Aside from *Resident Evil 4*, what's your favourite game in the series?

A: I would have to say the first *Resident Evil* game because I was part of the team that made it. At that time the game still felt new and fresh, and I'd also just joined the company and was working on a big game – so it has many great memories for me. In fact, there was a time that the game almost didn't get made – in the early stages of development the company did not believe in it 100 percent, and were not willing to commit $10 million or whatever to finish the project. However, as a team we believed in the game, and our enthusiasm eventually persuaded the company to let us do things our way. There were also a lot of long days and nights involved in making the first *Resident Evil*, so it will always have a special place in my heart.

Q: How does it make you feel to be one of the creators of the same series that has gone on to be a massive hit around the world?

A: We never thought in our wildest dreams that there would be a *Resident Evil* movie, that the game would be a hit, or that the series would be popular in so many countries. When we were developing the first game we were filled with doubts – would it sell, would people like it, would it be a failure? But, personally, I knew one thing for sure – that we were creating something original, a new kind of game

STATUE? YES, IT'S ME!

Salazar has built a huge statue of himself, which also has a pop at killing Leon. A statue?! Give Leon a break!

Fortunately the giant stone man isn't that quick off the mark so keep those knees up and stay relaxed.

Not content with trying to step on Leon, he starts chucking pillars at him as well. Where's the love?!

"DURING THE GAME HE'S ALLEVIATED OF HIS HEAD IN THE MOST BRUTAL WAY"

set pieces, there's wave upon wave of bad guys to dispense of, with each individual dropping ammo or health or treasure in return for being shot. Even the dogs carry shotgun shells here (always a sign of a bad neighbourhood), and so the game becomes a relentless self-perpetuating wheel of death. While titles such as *GTA* are showing the potential of games which allow you complete freedom in huge open worlds, Capcom is proving that linearity doesn't have to be a weakness. There's still fun to be had from following just the one path, especially when that path is more exciting than a day out with Batman.

Even though all this action sounds more like a shoot-'em-up rather than a survival horror, *Resi* still has the power to scare, which is partly do with its quirky control system. You don't get to shoot and strafe as every movement is covered by the right analogue stick, even the aiming. What this does is give you

SCOPE OPERA

Love sniper rifles? Love shooting things? Well *Resi 4* will be like Christmas come early. *Resi*'s rifle allows you to dispense of the enemy covertly. They don't know what hit them, you're happy – everyone's a winner.

The Lickers weren't too pretty, the Hunter weren't always welcome and the albino chimps from *Resi 0* were quite tasty, but nothing will prepare you for the Regenerators. They're like a laughing plate of jelly.

A = JUMP

All *Resi* characters used to able to do was run and shoot. Leon's far more flexible which allows for greater gameplay.

Most moves are context sensitive, but it allows Leon to take different routes round the level.

He can jump through windows, slide down zip rails, climb over walls and jump down from ledges. He's such a hero.

Leon's not just about the guns. He knows how to use his shoes like a ninja.

that no one else had ever done before, and that really boosted my confidence. At that time, whether the game would sell or not was anyone's guess – but I knew we were on the right path and I was always happy to be part of the team.

Q: When you think back over the series, what would your favourite scary moment be? Is there anything that would still make you jump?

A: Sadly, as I worked on all the games, there's nothing that still scares me! Having said that, there are times when you turn corners and things jump out that still give me the creeps. And that's part of the reason we worked so many classic *Resident Evil* scares into the new game – because they *still* make me nervous!

Q: What do you think of the Nintendo DS and Sony PSP? Is there anything they can bring to the *Resident Evil* series?

A: As we speak, the Nintendo DS and Sony PSP haven't been released in the US or Europe, so it's hard to say what they could bring to the *Resident Evil* series. However, in Japan we have a lot of hardcore gamers and both units sold out the day they were released, so it's obvious that they're both going to be popular. But it's impossible to tell which one will be the most successful or which one to go with. Essentially, we need to do more research to see what makes each unit unique before we commit to development. For a *Resident Evil* game the platform needs to be high quality, so that we can bring something fresh to the table. We'd have to utilise the system we choose to develop for – PSP, DS or some other console in the future – to the maximum.

Q: As the original *Resident Evil* holds such a special place in your heart, would you like it to have a second lease of life on the Sony PSP, for example?

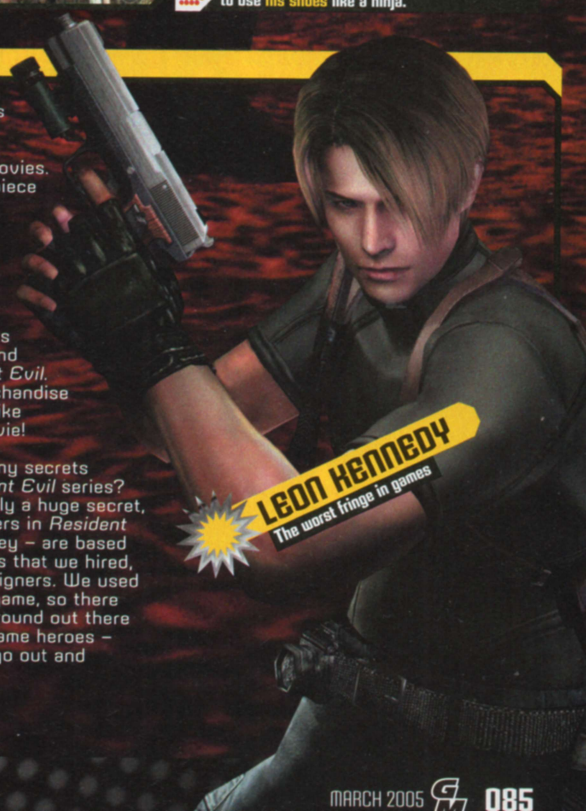
A: Putting *Resident Evil* on a portable device would make it mobile and new in that aspect but, unfortunately, it would be pretty much the same game. People who'd played it before it would be like, "Oh, wow! I remember this!", but that's where it would end – the game would not be fresh. If anything, we'd have to develop a totally new game, something that would fit the hardware.

Q: *Resident Evil* has inspired many of spin-offs, from action figures to Hollywood movies. What's your favourite piece of *Resident Evil* merchandise?

A: Definitely *Wesker's Report*, a special edition DVD of interviews with people who worked on the games that gave lots of interesting background information on *Resident Evil*. Sadly, most of the merchandise based on the series is like something from a B-movie!

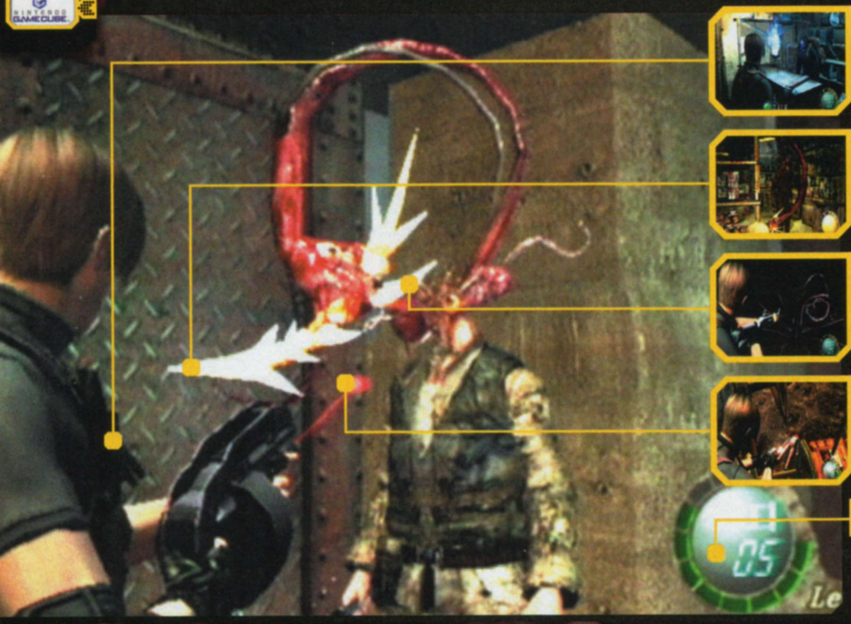
Q: Can you tell us any secrets about the *Resident Evil* series?

A: It's not necessarily a huge secret, but both characters in *Resident Evil 4* – Leon and Ashley – are based on real character models that we hired, both of whom were foreigners. We used their likenesses in the game, so there are people wandering around out there who look just like the game heroes – perhaps you'll want to go out and search for them!



QUIT WHILE HE HAD A HEAD

When you start playing *Resi 4*, it's easy to get head-shot happy. Try not to rely on that tactic too much, as later in the game things get far more complicated. It's all to do with parasites yer see.



LIFE JACKET

As well as guns, you can buy Leon a combat vest which will reduce damage by 30%.

SURPRISE!

Take heads off the bad guys in the latter stage and it's replaced by a razor sharp tentacle. Nice.

LAS PLAGAS

A parasite called Las Plagas which takes over their bodies is what is bothering the villagers.

PIN POINT

Thanks to the lazer sighting fixed on every gun, there's no excused for missing your target.

NO SHELLS

This is the first *Resi* to have onscreen info allowing you to see when you should reload.

very little peripheral vision, so the enemies – just by sheer force of numbers – can outflank Leon and get right in his face. Literally.

PSYCHO CHILLER

Another reason it genuinely scares is because when Leon gets messed-up, he really gets messed-up. During the game he is alleviated of his head, his hips, his legs and his intestines in the most brutal way possible. And you get to see it all happen, as *Resident Evil* is one of the most agressively bloody games you'll play. If you're the type of gamer that winces when your Pokémon faints or feel the violence in *The Incredibles* is a bit too graphic, you should to approach *Resi* with caution. Basically if gore was people, this would be China.

So not everyone is going to get to play *Resi 4* but that's the only downside to the game. Apart from that, *Resident Evil 4* is a complete triumph. While most games make you work for the moments of pleasure, *Resi 4* just can't stop giving. Ammunition is plentiful, there's save points where you need them and there's hardly back tracking, either – just 25+ hours of a guilt-free, snowballing assault on your senses.

If you required any confirmation or even some faith restored in just how thrilling, moving and breathtaking videogames can be, then *Resident Evil 4* is all you need. GM

BUY AND SELL

This gentlemen turns up everywhere to sell you stuff. From his accent he seems to be from Cornwall, via Australia.

Rather than the Big Issue, he's got a large stock of guns to sell. Shotgun, mine launcher, sniper rifle – he's got it all!

He can also upgrade your guns, which is useful. Firepower, reloading times, capacity and fire rate can all be improved.

To afford all this hardware you have to collect various precious stones and jewellery, which can be sold to the merchant.

If you combine your jewellery with certain precious stones you'll get a better price for them than if they were sold separately.

Other Formats

Also on:

Resi has been confirmed for both the Xbox and the PS2 – we expect these releases come autumn.

Or try this:

PC Doom 3 ..... 90%

THE BIG ANGRY BABY

After the giant insect and tentacled dogs, it's almost a relief to meet El Gigante again. It's almost like seeing an old friend, except he doesn't seem to pleased to see you. Someone must have got out the cave on the wrong side this morning.

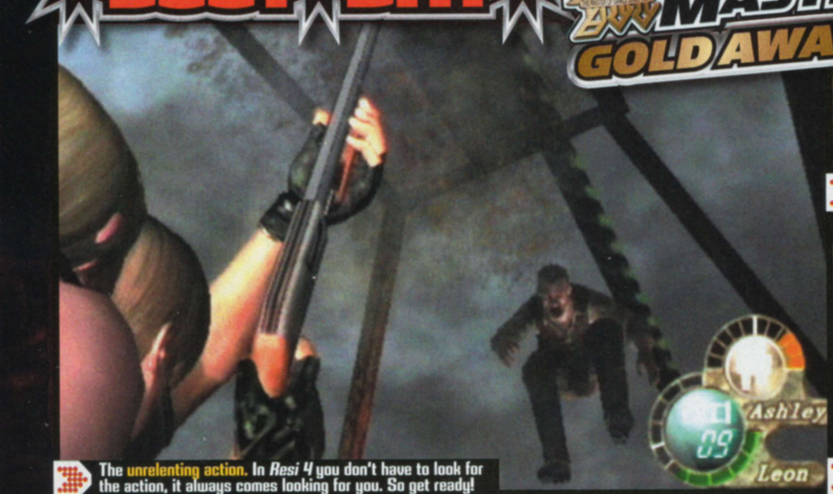
Leon has to face two of these ogres, one of which can be dispensed easily.

The other one takes some one hell of a beating and a few stabs to the wrist before it goes down.

To actually destroy an El Gigante you have to target the parasite that nestle in the giant's back.

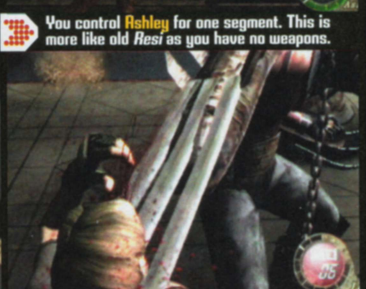
BEST BIT!

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD



The unrelenting action. In *Resi 4* you don't have to look for the action, it always comes looking for you. So get ready!

You control Ashley for one segment. This is more like old *Resi* as you have no weapons.



You have to admire Capcom's appetite for stomach-churning brutality. They just love it.

JUDGEMENT

DRUB

GM LOVES

- The way it looks, sounds and plays
- When you die it's spectacular
- The way the bad guys allow that merchant to work on their turf

GM HATES

- The shooting gallery challenges are really tough
- You don't get to have a go on the chainsaw
- That the game has to end

GRAPHICS 97%

Quite amazing. The GameCube might be small but it's capable of pure magic.

GAMEPLAY 95%

So simple, so brutal but so effective. The pressure bullies you into submission.

LIFESPAN 90%

There's at least 25+ hours of main game and two mini-games to unlock.

OVERALL

97%

One of the daring and brilliant sequels ever made. Astonishing, and beyond anything we could imagine.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Halo 2's single-player game, 95%

AS GOOD AS: ..... Half-Life 2. Maybe, 96%

WAIT FOR: ..... Nothing! Go get it now

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Haven: Call of the King
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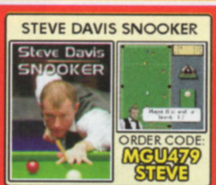
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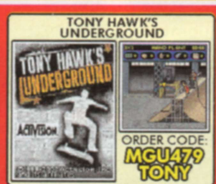
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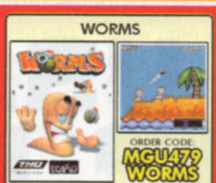
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PHANTOM BRAVE

Enough stats to drown a supercomputer...

Looks cute, eh? A turn-based strategy role playing game with some beautiful sprites, gorgeous backdrops, quirky characters and snazzy special attacks? See – cute as a kitten in a knitted sombrero.

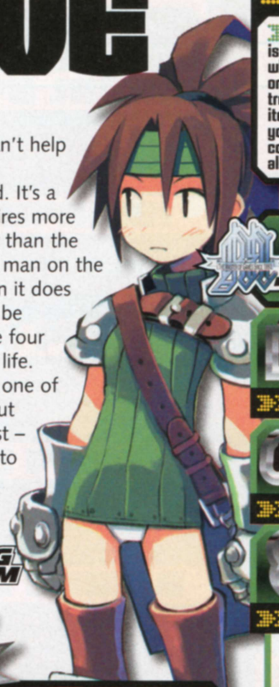
But don't pat *Phantom Brave* on the head just yet. If information is power, then *Phantom Brave* could overpower you within seconds, clawing out your throat with the demands of its combat and pulling out your teeth with menu after menu of dizzying stat-rammed lists.

The pseudo-sequel to the excellent and already-complex *Disgaea*, *Phantom Brave* takes things one giant leap further by causing your characters to develop, depending on the items that they use in battle. Which in turn causes the items themselves to evolve. Confused? Good. That's a healthy reaction.

BRAVERY REQUIRED

Whereas *Disgaea* used a grid system to move your characters about the battlefield – think Chess, but bigger – *Phantom Brave* lets you move anywhere within a certain circle centred on your character. While it sounds like it may be more flexible, it's not really, and the levels can become so rammed with items and enemies that confusion can easily set in.

While *Phantom Brave* allows for a far greater flexibility when compared to *Disgaea*, you can't help but feel that it's overcomplicated. It's a game that requires more raw brainpower than the act of putting a man on the moon. But when it does click into place, be prepared to lose four months of your life. Maybe five. It's one of the deepest – but far from the best – strategy games to have hit a console in recent years. You have been warned. GM



YOUR HQ

Phantom Isle is your base. It's where you will organise your troops, evolve items and sob into your knees at the complication of it all.

TOON ARMY

In order to bring characters into battle, you have to 'confine' them with items – rocks, trees, whatever. And that's *before* you begin to fight...

BEST BIT!

The cutscenes are really quite beautiful. The characters aren't as mental as Disgaea's, though...

...and with the cutscenes, you don't need an IQ of 398 in order to pass them.

JUDGEMENT

STEVE

GRAPHICS 80%
Funky but unimpressive 2D stuff – just classy sprites and backgrounds.

GAMEPLAY 84%
As deadly addictive as it is complex. Hard work, but your efforts are rewarded.

LIFESPAN 90%
Should be prescribed to keep mad people off the streets. FOREVER.

OVERALL

82%

More complicated than spaceships, this game could ruin your life either through confusion or addiction.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Shining Soul, 56%
WORSE THAN: ..... Disgaea, 88%
WAIT FOR: ..... Phantom Kings, winter
BEST PRICE: ..... £29.99, amazon.co.uk

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £19.99 • DEVELOPER: SNK • PUBLISHER: IGNITION
ONLINE: VERSUS • SPECIAL: NO • OTHER FORMATS: XB • CONTACT: 01462 456780 • PLAYERS: 1-2

SNK VS. CAPCOM: SVC CHAOS

Old-skool fisticuffs never felt so good!

There are those who argue that there is no place nowadays for 2D fighters in these heady days of 3D. Poppycock!

Boasting a monstrous roster of 34 fighters grabbed from *Street Fighter*, *King of Fighters*, *Fatal Fury*, *Samurai Showdown* and *Darkstalkers*, SVC Chaos puts *Tekken* and *Soul Calibur* to shame. But where the hell is Zangief?

There are tons of things to like about *SVC Chaos*, but the whole package doesn't quite feel as comprehensive as it should. It's not the tightest control-wise, and you're going to need an arcade stick to get the best out of this game.

CHAOS ENGINE

There's a big buzz to be had from seeing Capcom faves Ryu, Guile and Chun Li drawn in the edgier SNK style – infinitely cooler than their cartoony Capcom variants. Fighters live or die on their collision detection, and we'd be lying if we said we weren't a little disappointed with SVC. Bouts just don't feel meaty enough, and we also preferred Capcom's OTT finishing effects. Seeing as 2D fighters are a bit of a niche market, by now you're likely to either be a SNK or a Capcom man. So, as the old adage goes: select your fighting style. GM

MOTD

You'll never get tired of match-ups between SNK and Capcom's most famous fighters. Ryu vs. Kyo Kusanagi or Iori Yagami vs. Ken is the stuff of legend.

Famous redhead Iori is dyeing (sic) to get his hands on Ken's golden barnet.

Earthquake proves that the saying 'the bigger they are the harder they fall' is balls.

BEST BIT!

Genjyuro singes Guile's tousled locks with a Level 3 special attack. Better call Toni & Guy!

Top piece of cartoon totty Chun-Li has been saving this fireball up just for Terry.

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GRAPHICS 81%
Gloriously gritty SNK artwork but animation straight out of the '90s.

GAMEPLAY 79%
The classic 2D SNK gameplay feels strangely sluggish at times.

LIFESPAN 76%
Online compatibility means you'll never run out of opponents.

OVERALL

78%

Not quite the genre-defining moment we were hoping for, but at twenty squids SVC Chaos is worth a look.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Capcom Vs SNK 2EO, 55%
WORSE THAN: ..... Soul Calibur 2, 91%
WAIT FOR: ..... Tekken 5, summer
BEST PRICE: ..... £17.99, play.com

• OUT: 14TH FEBRUARY • FORMAT: XB • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: IN HOUSE
• PUBLISHER: EA • ONLINE: CO-OP, VS • OTHER FORMATS: PS2, GC, PC • CALL: 01932 450000 • PLAYERS: 1-4

WHAT IS IT?

EA's *FIFA* spin-off that focuses on the *UEFA Champions League*.

- Negotiate 50 objectives, both on and off the pitch
- Sports an official *Champions League* licence plus brill commentary

IN GAME CLIP: It's great to see 'smaller' clubs, including Norwich City and Everton, getting a game against the big boys.

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2004-05

EA's latest – champion? Or a load of balls?

SHARP SHOTS

Ronaldinho's sublime skill and tactical trickery are heaven sent. His teeth, meanwhile, could have only come from hell.

Ruud by name, offensive by nature. As a plus, though, he's a bloody good finisher.

Good old Goldenballs himself. Becks fancies himself as a ladies' man. With that voice should it be 'ladyman'?

Cisse, meanwhile, fancies himself as a fashion trendsetter. Pity his face looks sandblasted in *UEFA*...

The battle between Konami and EA for the videogame footy crown has more ebb and flow to it than the England vs Germany World Cup Final of '66. But is *UEFA* slick enough to snatch that last minute winner? EA's latest offering plays like a slightly more cinematic *FIFA*, but with the addition of a reasonably compelling plot that's nevertheless cornier than *Escape to Victory*.

After you've chosen your fave team from a selection of European leagues, a new chairman with more cash and attitude than Mr. Abramovich arrives on the scene. Unfortunately, it's not simply a case of signing stars such, as you'll have to complete certain set objectives whilst negotiating the minefield that is the domestic season and *Champions League*.

The new free kick system means that with a lot of practise and a little luck you'll soon be banging in absolute screamers. Eat my goal!

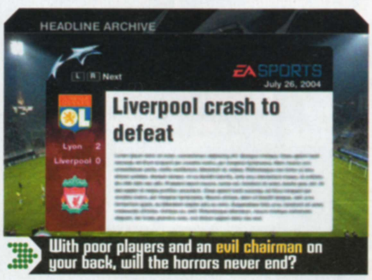
ROMAN LEGIONS

In an attempt to conjure up drama, *UEFA* frequently chucks you in at the deep end, meaning you'll be asked to overturn deficits and defend leads along the road to glory. This seems a great idea initially, but quickly grates as you hanker to get a normal 90 minutes under your belt.

Visually, *UEFA* packs a cinematic punch with the star players looking particularly natty in close up. A split-screen effect is frequently utilised to show both your manager and players after certain key moments of a match. Sound effects sound a mite hollow, but the crowd effects and the Clive Tyldesley and Andy Gray co-commentary are the most realistic *GM* have ever heard.

On the pitch, *UEFA* is reminiscent of *FIFA*. *Too* reminiscent of *FIFA*, actually. Call us cynical, but what with FIFA's 2004 incarnation barely out of its tracksuit, is there really any need for a near-identical spin-off? *UEFA*, although a good game, borders on overkill and – personally – we still prefer *Pro Evo*. anyway.

UEFA's transfer market is basic. Terry, Pires and Martins for £30m? Snap them up!



With poor players and an evil chairman on your back, will the horrors never end?

Other Formats

Also on:

PS2 CUBE PC *UEFA* is a near-identical game on all the other formats. Online capability is the only added bonus of the Xbox and PC versions.

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GM LOVES

+ The glitzy, glamorous *Champions League* presentation
+ The addictive season mode really captures your attention
+ Scoring 30-yard free kicks

GM HATES

- Getting shouted at by our chairman for not winning by a three-goal margin
- The dastardly antics of EA's sequel specialists
- The lack of any international sides

GRAPHICS 85%

Typical EA fare. Even more polished than Fabien Barthez's bonce.

GAMEPLAY 86%

Slicker than an interchange between Xabi Alonso and Steven Gerrard.

LIFESPAN 80%

Loads of unlockables to discover and the scenario mode is endless fun.

OVERALL

75%

It's a classy kickabout, but why buy Scott Parker when you already own Frank Lampard?

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..Club Football 2005, 72%
WORSE THAN: .....Pro Evolution Soccer 4, 95%
WAIT FOR: ..... Pro Evo 5, TBC
BEST PRICE: ..... £32.99, amazon.co.uk

> "TO CONJURE UP DRAMA, UEFA FREQUENTLY CHUCKS YOU IN AT THE DEEP END"

WORLD CLASS

UEFA's presentation screams 'classy' from the off. Cue many a balmy European night, poncey choir singing and the inevitable last-minute Manchester United winner.

Oh dear – another Beckham penalty threatens to go hideously wrong. Astronauts everywhere duck as one.

The Monaco players looked long and hard at the opposition goalie. He almost seemed glued to the ball...

OUT: 23RD FEBRUARY • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: NAMCO • PUBLISHER: SONY
ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • CONTACT: 020 7859 5000 • PLAYERS: 1

WHAT IS IT?

A typically polished Namco shooter with a hint of flight sim thrown in for good measure.

- Twice the size of *Ace Combat 4: Distant Thunder*
- Features 50 of the world's most advanced fighters

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: The thrill is in the chase: take off, find an enemy using your radar, lock onto his worthless hide and send a couple of missiles right up his fuselage. Oh yeah.

ACE COMBAT: SQUADRON LEADER

This Namco beauty can be our wingman any time...

You'd be forgiven for thinking that the aerial dogfighting genre is hardly chockablock with new entrants, last year's *Crimson Skies* aside. But Namco's peerless *Ace Combat* series has been going supersonic in Japan and the US for some time now, making it the most loved arcadey fly-'em-up since Sega's *Afterburner*. And now we Brits get a taste of the action.

Considering how scary the inside of a real cockpit looks like, the planes in *Ace Combat 5* are all remarkably easy to get to grips with. Once you've worked out your yaw and pitch from your roll, you'll be soaring through the clouds faster than Terry Thomas in *Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines*.

Atmosphere flows from every pore of *Ace Combat 5*, and although you won't be spewing all over the cockpit, your headset will be filled with incessant chatter from the rest of your squadron. You now even have the option to reply to some of their jibes – making for some amusing conversations! Escort missions, search and destroy ops and boss fights are all present and correct, too.

Ace Combat 5's most exciting new feature is the addition of three controllable wingmen. Not only can you issue basic orders, but you can also upgrade their rides, and you'll feel a genuine responsibility to get your men home in one piece.

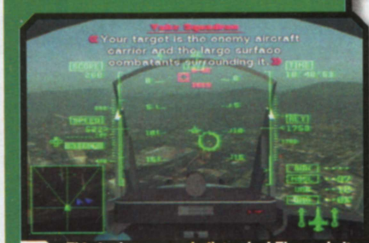
Ace Combat 5 is another great chapter in an underrated series. Budding Mavericks should make sure this is one bogey they don't flick aside. GM

VIEWTIFUL!

There are three ways of viewing the action in *AC5* – cockpit, no cockpit and external. No cockpit is the simplest to use, but we'd recommend cockpit for that authentic touch. Tally ho!

Outside of the plane looks cool and is handy for regaining your bearings.

No cockpit gives you the best view of your surroundings but is a touch bland.



This is the way real pilots play! The cockpit looks static but just feels right somehow.

GROUND CONTROL

Visually, *Ace Combat 5* is a mixed bag. The presentation is typically classy Namco fare, all pseudo-aeronautical menus and some of the tensest cinematic cutscenes we've seen in ages. Get into your plane, though, and the wings fall off somewhat, with static looking cockpits putting a dent in the missions.

The outside scenery is mostly great, if a little sparse on detail, with some amazingly diverse landscapes to race across. On the other hand, we've seen flashier plane explosions from a £4.99 set of fireworks from Woolworths, and they have hardly improved since 2002's *Ace Combat 4: Distant Thunder*.

This screen allows you to splash the cash on new planes before missions.

"YOUR HEADSET WILL BE FILLED WITH THE INCESSANT CHATTER OF YOUR SQUADRON"

BEST BIT!

The radio chatter with your team mates, although annoying when you have to reply to their questions in the middle of a fight, adds to the aerial experience.

The later levels and planes really make up for the relatively dull first few missions.

The replay function at the end of each mission lets you sit back and feel all smug.

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GM LOVES

+ Pretending that we're important pilots saving the world with our daredevil skills
+ The authentic recreation of aerial dogfights so fast they'd give Biggles airsickness

GM HATES

- Having to restart missions from waaay back after just one teeny-weeny mistake
- Shooting your millionth plane down does get a little bit boring after a while

GRAPHICS 91%
The planes themselves look darn fine, and the landscapes later on look amazing.

GAMEPLAY 85%
Not detailed enough to be authentic, but arcadey enough to be gratifying.

LIFESPAN 72%
Both campaign and arcade modes ensure oodles of depth.

OVERALL

82%

A typically impressive Namco stab at the genre, and worth a look if you're after something a bit different.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Ace Combat 4, 84%
WORSE THAN: ..... Crimson Skies, 83%
WAIT FOR: ..... Heroes of the Pacific, TBC
BEST PRICE: ..... £32.99, Game

Other Formats

The closest alternatives on your format:

XBOX Crimson Skies: Road to Revenge..... 83%
CUBE Fireblade..... 76%
PC Crimson Skies..... 79%

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OUT: NOW (JAP) 11TH MARCH • **FORMAT:** PS2 • **PRICE:** £39.99 • **DEVELOPER:** POLYPHONY DIGITAL
PUBLISHER: SONY • **ONLINE:** NO • **SPECIAL:** LAN, GT FORCE PRO WHEEL
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • **WEB:** WWW.PLAYSTATION.JP/SCEJ/TITLE/GT4/MAIN.HTML • **PLAYERS:** 1-2, 1-6 LAN

WHAT IS IT?

The immensely realistic sequel to the series that sold 32 million copies.

- 650 cars with the promise of many more to unlock
- B-Spec mode: an AI driver takes care of the wheel work

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: We are the champions! There's no prizes for losers in *Gran Turismo 4*, and with a bit of bump and a little grind, first place is held onto, just...

GRAN TURISMO 4

It's finally here, or at least it is over there...

Back in 2003, *GT4* was rumoured to cure the common cold, spread world peace and save the PS2 from mediocre driving games. In short, it was to be the messiah in oil-stained overalls. Two years of slips and slides later and its golden game status was looking tarnished. The developers, Polyphony, stalled as the online option was unceremoniously dumped, modes were lost in translation and the words '*GT4* delayed' appeared so many times that many people started to think that was the game's name. Some cynical forum folk and fanatical fanboys even doubted if the title would ever arrive.

Obviously it is neither a greasy gaming god, nor a *Driver 3*-shaped disaster. The truth is slightly more complex. First off, *GT4* isn't a radical leap forward from the aged *GT3* A-Spec. The absence of the much talked about online option is a hefty blow to its celebrated status. Part of the joy of the *GT* series has always been in buying, building and tuning a racing behemoth. So to be once again lacking the chance to compete and compare with a mate on the net is a serious shortage. Similarly, the long expected option to see the motors being ripped, wrecked and rendered is still missing. Sure, a little screen jolt has been added to make you notice those bone-crunching slams. There is still very little reason not to nudge, shove and ram your way into pole position, though. But that is it. Those two, tiny things are what is wrong with *GT4* and nothing else. For the rest of the game is meticulous, immaculate and uniquely fulfilling.

TURISMORE

From the moment that the cellophane wrapping hits the floor, your complaints will be consigned to the same dark corner as the dusty old *GT* Concept. There is more to be unwrapped inside this gem of a game than any since *GT2*. That's right, we said *GT2* – because as much as the world loved A-Spec, its visuals and slightly enhanced handling were all that made it stand above it PSone forefather. So what if the older game had all the on-screen appeal of a rusting Capri? There was no getting away from the fact it had

GLOBAL GEAR

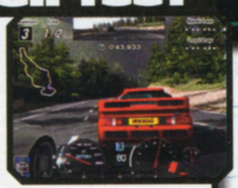
Out of all the new circuits, some of the finest are the real life ones. These immaculately mapped masterpieces mirror their real equivalents and often contain some of the nastiest turns of all.

Nurburging is a favourite. Stupidly fast, it's the narrowest strip of road around.

The Twin Ring Motegi Road course's tight bends make it a real test to win on.

Suzuka is the famous F1 track – the 'bus stop' chicanes make it hard work.

CRASH TEST



Cars can't be wrecked by ramming into rivals, so Polyphony have come up with new ways of demonstrating the damage you are doing to the motor. If you bump into someone from behind the screen shakes.

QUICK SILVER

With so many Detroit's draughtsman's dreams made metal, you'd think that there would be enough cars for everyone...

Back from *GT 2* comes a huge selection of classic cars, like this Mercedes. They might not light everyone's fire though.

Open wheelers and lightweight racers like the Caterham 7 demonstrate that you don't need to be big to win races.

Petrol swallowing SUVs and 4WDs have been added this year along with their own events and races.

STREET CAR NAMED DESIRE

Joining the lovely Seattle street course are a number of other urban raceways, and what they are often lacking in length they certainly make up for it in roadside detail. So if you ever fancied racing around Paris, now you can...

While Las Vegas looks fantastic, it is actually only a straight speed test track.

We bump along through cobbled streets of Paris as the historic monuments fly by.

New York is another tear around town that looks busy and pretty but lacks surprises.

The Mission mode puts you into a pre-set car in a pre-determined race and demands a win.

Time can be speeded up in the B-Spec mode so you don't need to watch the race unfold.

SECOND HAND JOB

As you move around Car Town you will see three sets of second hand car dealers offering a huge selection of new and old machines.

With just 100,000 credits to spend at first you'll have to scrape around to buy any new car.

Or buy a bargain like a two-year-old Skyline which can be picked up for a third of the cost of a new Mini.

"EVERY ONE OF THE CARS IS DETAILED AND MODELLED TO ALMOST SUB-ATOMIC LEVEL"

more cars, more detail and more life then the last PS2 outing. Well, *GT4* corrects this mistake by piling on a frankly ridiculous 650 cars, 35 full-length courses, 62 licence tests and 80 motor manufacturers. And while there are certainly plenty of returning favourites to be found in the garages and menus, this long delayed sequel offers more, so much more than that...

POLE POSITION

Visually there is no competition, *GT4* stands alone. Every one of the cars is detailed and modelled to almost the sub-atomic level. From real-time reflections, bonnet badges and even the brake discs inside the wheels, you can see that every panel and polygon is positioned perfectly. More importantly, these cutscene-quality cars move with in a flawlessly detailed world. *NFS:U 2* messily vomits its gaudy world onto the screen in jerky spasms, hoping to hide its flaws under flashy effects. *GT4*, meanwhile, has not a pixel or frame out of place. Instead the racing takes place with a silky smoothness that only a 60 frames per second rate and progressive scan can ensure. So however ragged and frantic your cornering becomes, the game never pauses or slows. It doesn't even betray the strain of constantly controlling six superbly detailed cars by revealing any pop-up or clipping anywhere.

But the beauty of the game goes far beyond the superficial joys of the screenshots. Because as a realistic driving experience, *GT4* also feels 'right' more than ever. This is down to some dramatically re-worked handling that has made every one of these 650 individual cars more convincing, and even more challenging. Greater weight has been

WATCH WITH MOTHER

Cataracts or no cataracts, convincing an elderly relative that *Gran Turismo 4* is really the TV should be a doddle. Somehow Polyphony have found a way to improve the replay mode yet again.

The detail on each and every machine will make any rival developers cry bitter tears of jealously. Watch it and weep!

The Drive option has all the weird effects and energetic camera angles you'd expect from a *Gran Turismo* game.

SO WHO IS WINNING?

Since *GT4* is all about simulation not arcadey gratification, the only way to really win races is to forget about power slides and follow the racing line. Or the car ahead.

Really you will need to use the interior view of the car to drive properly, but this looks prettier.

Keep an eye on the map, you'll need to learn every course to win.

Your rivals are smarter than before but they aren't as bright as us.

Keep an eye on your revs, gear and fuel levels in Endurance events.

MODEL CARS

Modifying your car in *GT4* is about more than just pouring super-glue on your bonnet and ram-raiding Poundland. Instead you'll want to spend your money on mods that will actually win you races.

Tyre wear is a key factor, as really soft ones will only last a few laps of the track.

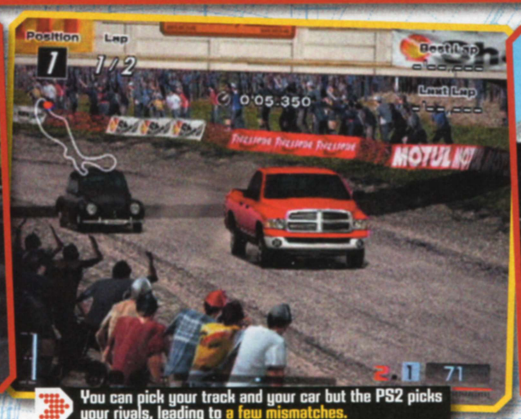
To please you *Underground* types, Nitrous Oxide can be bolted on, at a small price.

And it works well too, provided you use it in short bursts on the final straight.

RUSH HOURS

If you find the *GT* mode too intimidating, Arcade lets you start straight away with no need for a Haynes manual or an evening class in engine maintenance – these cars are ready to roll from the off.

At first your selection of tracks and motors is a little limited, but winning A-Spec points will unlock extras.



You can pick your track and your car but the PS2 picks your rivals, leading to a few mismatches.

It might not be online but you can still get six mates to go head to head over a LAN network.

given to the suspension and road-holding, too. You can feel more about the position of each wheel and tyre, and the state of the road beneath you. Just take a car into the improved off-road section and you'll feel the rough gravel tug and pull as every jolt comes straight through the pad and into your hands.

DRIVEN AWAY

In the past, one of the major flaws with the series has been the number of tarmac tracks. Certainly there are some corking concrete courses, such as Seattle and Apricot Hill, but too many of them have been recycled game after game, that you could drive them automatically. *GT4* cracks this problem, as not only have 20 or so brand new tracks been added, but most are either outstandingly beautiful or scarily quick. Just take a blast around El Capitan where you can stare at the mountain range. Or head for the brilliant Nurburging Nordschleife where the rough road surface and narrow track really show off the improved tarmac textures and the much-demanded sense of speed.

The only one of these new additions that hasn't added much to the game is the B-Spec mode. It's a novel idea to allow you to decide how to run a race without grabbing hold of the wheel, but it isn't going to detain too many serious drivers past an initial pleasing first play. For like the fiddly photo mode, it will please the *GT* zealot but confuse anyone who doesn't want to dedicate their life to this epic game.

BRAKE DOWN

Without question, *GT4* is the best realistic racing game for any console. Its rivals just can't compete for depth, involvement or refinement. Next to it *Underground 2* feels flimsy and simplistic while even the brilliant *Burnout 3* seems easier to enjoy, but harder to love. *GT4* is a game that rewards your effort, and wants you to

DIRTY PRO

Getting off-road is now no longer the huge problem it used to be as many more of the cars are able to get mucky.

The rounds are rougher – the gravel feels bumpier than the tarmac.

The stupidly steep Pikes' Peak has disappeared from the off-road roster and we miss it already.

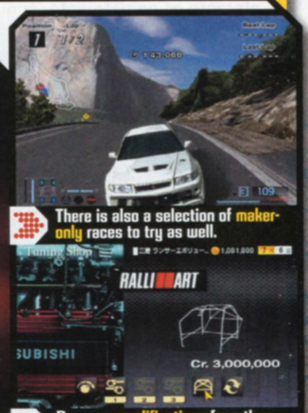
GARAGE LAND

Instead of heading to any garage or modification stations, all of the 80 motor manufacturers have their own home page.

Inside each of the major garages you will find four ports of call.

Dealers have new and classic cars for you to buy for big bucks.

There is also a garage of rare, unlockable or slightly crap motors for you to drool or snigger over.



There is also a selection of maker-only races to try as well.

Buy your modifications from the maker of your car or a dealer.

B-SPECTACLE

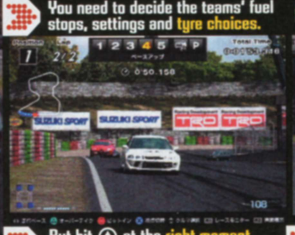
The B-Mode shifts you out of the driver's chair and into the manager's seat. Earning cash this way makes a nice change from racing but it probably won't sate your desire to get back behind the wheel.

An AI driver does the wheelwork while you pick the strategy.

The numbers show how hard your driver is pushing the guy in front.

You need to decide the teams' fuel stops, settings and tyre choices.

You choose how hard to attack but over do it and you will spin out of the race.



But hit Ⓐ at the right moment and he'll edge his way to the front.

The more times your driver wins the more hard cash you win.

BE THE BRIT

While most of the cars in the game are still Japanese models there are lots of British classics, but they don't come cheap.

Why not pretend you are Mad Max in the forgotten Jensen Interceptor or a take a Marcos out for a little spin?

How about mixing with the upper classes and then showing them whose boss in this Range Rover?

If you really want to fly the flag then trying winning this Le Mans edition Jag for some real racing power.

PHOTO SHOP

At first, the complete lack of English in the Japanese version of the game makes this mode a nightmare to use. But once you understand it, the snaps can be pretty good – so long as you have roughly six hours to shoot them.

You can either take just your car out onto the track and take snaps from the replay...

Or you can try to stage a photo in a picturesque location like the Grand Canyon or San Marino.

Both the car and camera can be moved, the focus adjusted and the angle shifted.

After a few hours you can produce something beautiful, sadly we found it all a bit too tricky.

"THE GAME REWARDS YOUR EFFORTS AND WANTS YOU TO REVEAL ITS SECRETS"

reveal more of its secrets without being too easy. We love it, and it loves us too.

But when it comes down to the core of the action, *Gran Turismo 4* is really A-Spec with the full option package; traction control, a new stereo, metallic paint, all-leather trim and a bigger beast under the bonnet. What it isn't is quite the revolution that two years ago we were all hoping for. But once the hardware catches up with Polyphony we should be at least halfway through this step and ready for the great leap forward.

GM

Other Formats

The closest alternative on your format:

XBOX	Porze	N/A
PC	World Racing	88%
CUBE	Burnout 2	88%

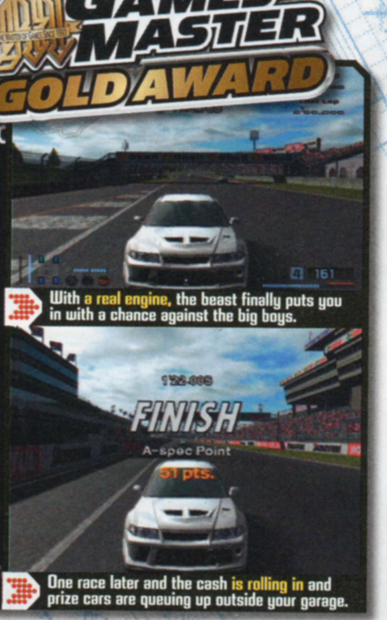
El Capitan is the name of the mountain that dominates this track and it makes a great setting for a snap.

TEST TIME

Where would *GT* be with the licence tests? We found most of the actual tasks to be a bit easier this time around – the Bronze standard now seems to be more generous.

BEST BIT!

After weeks of struggle, after endless races when you went home with a mouthful of dust instead of champagne, you finally get a real car.



With a real engine, the beast finally puts you in with a chance against the big boys.

One race later and the cash is rolling in and prize cars are queuing up outside your garage.

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD

JUDGEMENT

ALEX

GM LOVES

- That trademark realism
- The sheer hard work needed to win
- Nurburgring! Nurburgring!

GM HATES

- We still take no damage
- We can't take our motors online
- Too many mad Japanese songs

GRAPHICS 97%

Not a pixel is out of place, not a frame of animation is wasted.

GAMEPLAY 94%

Immaculate handling meets fantastic realism and even AI rivals are sharper.

LIFESPAN 96%

Endless possibilities to be found in the garage and the miles of tarmac.

OVERALL

94%

This is well worth the wait – *Gran Turismo 4* is the biggest and most hardcore *GT* yet.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Need For Speed Underground, 82%

WORSE THAN: ..... The real thing

BEST PRICE: £30.99, mk2.co.uk

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: XB • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: DAY 1 STUDIOS
PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT • ONLINE: MULTI-PLAYER • SPECIAL: DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.MECHASSAULT2.XBOX.COM • PLAYERS: 1-12

WHAT IS IT?

Stompy sequel to the surprise Xbox Live favourite, featuring a bulked up single-player campaign and an avalanche of online modes.

• Leave your Mech and roam levels as a squishy human

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP

Survive a scrap with a towering mech rival, and a puddle of power-ups are yours, refilling your energy and beefing you up ready for whatever's waiting around the corner...

MECHASSAULT 2: LONE WOLF

They're bad and ugly: Go ahead junk, mech my day...

When Xbox Live launched, it was lovely, but lonely. It had no friends – none of those initial online games were anywhere near as fun as we'd expected. Then along came *MechAssault*, with its slack single-player manbreasts but whistling a memorable multi-player tune, and they hit off like drunks in a jail cell. Has that bond been broken at all with this sequel? Kind of. But not really.

Lone Wolf is an improvement, for sure, in all aspects. The single-player mode has been given more texture, as you've the ability to leave your mech and hijack rival robots, but it still feels a little flat – there's just not enough fizz in those missions to make it a worthwhile purchase for purely offline players. There's some variety, such as the occasional stealth section, but the bulk of fun is had from killing other massive deathmobiles with your massive deathmobile. And that's always more entertaining when they're controlled by other people.

PANDORA'S BOTS

As an online game, it's solid and distracting stuff, offering a plump sack of modes from the typical stuff to something more imaginative (the co-op endurance of the Grinder mode). There's also the enjoyable and potentially never-ending Conquest mode battle, where players ally themselves with a faction and fight for possession of an galaxy full of planets.

Ultimately, while it's a worthy sequel, it's long been surpassed by the likes of *Halo 2* – a game that offers something more varied along with a supreme one-player campaign. Meaning that, while Xbox Live now has all the friends in the world, it's *MechAssault* that's looking like it might end up feeling lonely. GM

MECH-ANICS

Each mech has three different weapons that can't be modified, just upgraded. Three is enough to keep you busy, though.

Killing a rival will cause it to drop some power-ups, one of which will boost your weapons up a notch for a couple of ammo rounds.

Nearly all mechs feature shields that can be activated to deflect different types of firepower. Viva la cowardice, eh?

A few of the slinkier mechs can engage thrusters, allowing them to glide about like rusty, fume-spewing clouds of doom.

"THE BULK OF THE FUN IS TO BE HAD FROM KILLING MASSIVE DEATHMOBILES"

FEATURING! Giant-ass death-metal machines

A limited edition *Lone Wolf* pack is available, including two new maps and video extras.

You won't survive for long in spacey pyjamas without a weapon to keep you warm.

SCRAPPING METAL

These mechs stand some 40 feet tall, and weigh around 50 tons. A hail of anti-aircraft bullets is like a drizzle of refreshing raindrops against their uncaring metallic bums. Here are just three of the terrifyingly huge buggers...

The Uziel mech is a nippy little number, with both hover and shield facilities.

The Thor mech stands upright, and packs a hefty time-delay mine in its arsenal.

The Prometheus mech is the stuff of the gods. Even the buildings bow down before it.

Other Formats

The closest alternatives on your format:

PS2	Armoured Core 3	66%
PS2	Battle Engine Aquila	87%
CUBE	Robotech: Battlecry	68%

JUDGEMENT

STEVE

GM LOVES

+ The well-realised sense of piloting a massive mechanical angel of death
+ The plentiful levels of environmental destruction during firefights

GM HATES

- The lack of strategy and depth in the combat
- The average single-player campaign
- There's no customisation for your mechs

GRAPHICS 39%

Pretty chaos and destruction, thanks to lovely explosions and lighting.

GAMEPLAY 35%

Accessible and instantly satisfying, but can become dull all too quickly.

LIFESPAN 34%

Forget playing offline - this could keep you playing online for some time.

OVERALL

70%

A good, but not great, online-focussed war game that's just not exciting enough to threaten *Halo 2*.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Robot Wars: Extreme, 28%
WORSE THAN: ..... Steel Battalion, 86%
BEST PRICE: ..... £32.99, game.uk.com

■ OUT: 11TH MARCH ■ FORMAT: PS2 ■ PRICE: £39.99 ■ DEVELOPER: NAUTILUS ■ PUBLISHER: MIDWAY
■ ONLINE: NO ■ OTHER FORMATS: NONE ■ WEB: WWW.MIDWAY.COM ■ PLAYERS: 1

SHADOW HEARTS: COVENANT

Is home where the 'Hearts is?

You know you're in for something a little different when a title decides to include Wales as part of its game world. We've not had many non-rally games set in Welsh climes – Sly Raccoon dipped its opening level in the country, while PSone role playing game *Koudelka* was set in a monastery in Aberystwyth. Ten years from now, it'll probably be the hottest virtual property around – *Neath For Speed Underground*, anyone?

ONE IN THE COVEN

So, *Shadow Hearts: Covenant* is an RPG whose greatest strength is its crackpot quirkiness: its nutty characters and interesting locations. It's set in the real world, post World War I, and yet it still features all manner of growling demons, magic attacks and the kind of fantasy props that wouldn't look out of place in a *Final Fantasy*.

The game itself, despite its nutty charm, does lack polish in its voice acting and the quality of in-game graphics, but its an otherwise-solid RPG. Combat involves a system of timed button presses, and is engaging enough, but just feels a little too much like business as usual when compared to the dizzying depth of *Disgaea*.

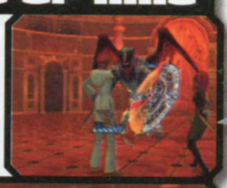
SH:C is another pleasant PS2 RPG to add to the pile. If you're a big enough RPG fan to care about this game it's likely that there's already a queue of equivalent or better games on your playlist, just waiting to be loved. GM

RING-A-DING

Your Judgment Rings can be customised to make it easier or harder to time the attacks, and you get lesser or greater rewards accordingly. Fingers on the buttons time...

KING OF RING

The Judgment Ring allows you to perform attacks. Just stop the rotating arm as it passes over the 'attack' sectors, and you're in business.



JUDGEMENT — STEVE

GRAPHICS 76%
Excellent CGI movies. The rest looks fine, but nothing kicks you in the eyes.

GAMEPLAY 78%
Solid battle system, but nothing special. Peculiar characters is a draw.

LIFESPAN 33%
Some 40 hours of main questing, with plenty of frippery if you want to see it all.

OVERALL

78%

Colourful in character and location if nothing else, *Covenant* is a likeable RPG experience.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:..... Drakengard, 60%
WORSE THAN:..... Disgaea, 88%
WAIT FOR:..... Final Fantasy 12, TBC
BEST PRICE:..... £30, play.com

BEST BIT!

The combo option sees your characters pooling their attacks into one big bucket of pain.

As well as using the Judgment Ring, you tap buttons displayed on the back of a coin.

■ OUT: FEBRUARY ■ FORMAT: PS2 ■ PRICE: £39.99 ■ DEVELOPER: SNK ■ PUBLISHER: SNK
■ ONLINE: NO ■ OTHER FORMATS: NONE ■ CONTACT: WWW.SNKPLAYMOREUSA.COM ■ PLAYERS: 1-2

KING OF FIGHTERS: MAXIMUM IMPACT

2D or not 2D, *that* is the question...

Mai puts her best foot forward. Into Athena's crotch, that is.

Terry Bogard, Kyo Kusanagi, Mai Shiranui and the gang are back for yet another round of fisticuffs, but what's this? Have SNK finally sold out to the evils of 3D?

We should say that *Maximum Impact* is an aesthetic makeover rather than a full-on gameplay revolution, as the actual fights play very similarly to before. Still, *Soul Calibur 2* and *Dead or Alive 3* feel light years ahead of SNK's golden oldie.

Maximum Impact's story mode looks as if it was literally cobbled together in five minutes. It's beatable in half an hour – providing you can beat the rock-hard final boss, Duke. After that there are four hidden fighters to unlock, but as per usual two-player mode is where the major laughs are to be had.

KOF's new challengers don't really make much of an impact. The rare stand-outs include Lien – a busty assassin notable chiefly for breasts that would make Jordan feel inadequate – and Capoeira master Soiree, a rip-off (sorry homage) of *Tekken*'s Eddy Gordo.

TEKKEN THE MICK

We fretted that the inimitable *KOF* personality would go AWOL during the move to 3D, and to an extent our fears were confirmed. Generic-looking models just don't match up to arguably the greatest artwork in the gaming world.

Maximum Impact is not a terrible game by any means, but the whole shebang lacks polish, and we've come to expect better from SNK. Unless you're a *KOF* nut, there are miles better – and cheaper – alternatives, including SNK's own superior *SVC Chaos* (reviewed on page 88). *Maximum Impact* is a curio and little else. GM

JUDGEMENT — ROB

GRAPHICS 77%
Basic, but special effects are flashy while the action shifts at blistering pace.

GAMEPLAY 76%
The classic 2D SNK gameplay feels slightly dated in the 3D arena.

LIFESPAN 39%
Apart from multi-player and the DVD, there's little to come back to here.

OVERALL

66%

Coming from SNK, we're a little disappointed, but *Maximum Impact*'s potential is there for all to see.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:..... Rumble Roses, 52%
WORSE THAN:..... Soul Calibur 2, 91%
WAIT FOR:..... Tekken 5, summer
BEST PRICE:..... £29.99, amazon.co.uk

BEST BIT!

What did you think we were going to say? Seriously though, what a set of polygons.

Soiree is the best choice for SNK newbies. Check out those Caterpillars...

He's more like 'Ryu' than 'Ryo' with fireballs like that.

REVIEWS ROUND UP

XBOX PCCD
• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PC • PRICE: £29.99
• DEVELOPER: STARBREEZE AB • PUBLISHER: VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES • ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NO • OTHER FORMAT: XBOX
• CALL: 0118 920 9100 • PLAYERS: 1

CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK: ESCAPE FROM BUTCHER BAY - DEVELOPER'S CUT

The best game you've never played – yet, that is...

Everyone's favourite bad guy Riddick hits the PC, incarcerated in Butcher Bay and bugged by sadistic warden Hoxie. Cue a gripping mix of action, stealth, RPG and adventure as our hero makes his bid for freedom.

Although *Riddick*'s gun combat feels sluggish, there's the best melee system yet seen in an FPS, and the graphics left us sporting soppy grins.

So, is this the game *Doom 3* should have been? Not quite, but *Riddick* can be found at a bargain price and is a criminally low-key release. GM

REVIEWER: Rob Taylor

Life in Butcher Bay is a whole different world to *Bad Girls*, that's for sure.

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 89%

Finished *Half Life 2* and *Doom 3*? Now buy *Riddick*. Please.

XBOX PCCD
• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: XBOX • PRICE: £29.99
• DEVELOPER: 369 INTERACTIVE • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT
• ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NO • OTHER FORMAT: PC
• CALL: 01932 838230 • PLAYERS: 1

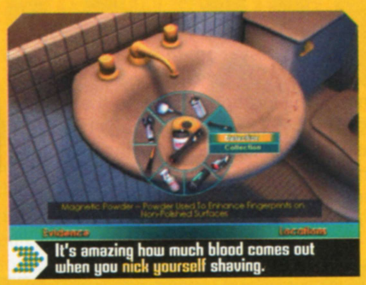
CSI: CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

About as much fun as finding a dead body...

Xbox owners, now's your chance to play the game of the series that inspired a generation of forensic pathologists! We bet you can't wait...

Drafted in as a new member of the fabled CSI team, you use your analytical skills to solve convoluted murders. There are cases from both the original *CSI* and the sequel *Dark Motives*, so you'll be wracking your brain for ages.

CSI is reasonably well made, and fans will enjoy interacting with series faves including brooding Gil Grissom and babelicious Catherine Willows. Everyone else will probably find the painstakingly slow progress, pixel hunting and trial and error gameplay the *real* killer. GM



It's amazing how much blood comes out when you nick yourself shaving.

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 59%

Gaming heaven if you get your kicks in seedy motels fleecing corpses.

GAME BOY ADVANCE
• OUT: 01/02/2005 • FORMAT: GBA • PRICE: £29.99
• DEVELOPER: RARE • PUBLISHER: THQ
• ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NO • OTHER FORMAT: NONE
• CALL: 01483 767656 • PLAYERS: 1-4

BANJO PILOT

A pitifully plain plane game.

Think *Wacky Races* starring a bear and you're pretty close to sussing out what *Banjo Pilot* is all about. Reckon it sounds good? No? You're right – it's all a bit disappointing really.

Banjo Pilot aspires to be the aeronautic equivalent of *Mario Kart*, but sadly lacks any of the style or charm of Nintendo's classic. In theory, being able to fly up and down the screen as well as left or right opens up a whole new dimension, but the reality sent us down to earth with a hard bump. Win a few cups, race against a blind mole called Bottles to collect puzzle pieces and that's your lot.

With shoddy visuals and twee tunes, *Banjo Pilot* feels more dated than nylon bell-bottomed flares. GM

Think *Mario Kart*, but with wings, propellers and stuff. And a bear.

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 52%

A stupid idea poorly executed. We expect better from Rare.

PS2
• OUT: 25/02/2005 • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £19.99
• DEVELOPER: KOEI • PUBLISHER: KOEI
• ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NO • OTHER FORMAT: NONE
• CALL: 01462 476130 • PLAYERS: 1-2

SAMURAI WARRIORS XTREME LEGENDS

Xtremely solid but not quite legendary Samurai showdown.

Xtreme Legends is a budget priced expansion pack to *Samurai Warriors*, but it'll also run on its own – albeit in a cut-down form.

It's basically an old-school mix of strategy hack 'n' slash set in medieval Japan. Choose your fave Samurai hero from a cast of four and lead wave after wave of slaughter while upgrading your weaponry and mystical powers.

It's great for a few hours of mindless violence but consider saving your pennies and hanging on for the inevitable *Samurai Warriors 2*. GM

Tadakatsu unleashes a whoop-ass magical attack on the enemy hordes.

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 68%

Looks and plays nicely enough, but it's one for the fans only.

PCCD
• OUT: 18/02/2005 • FORMAT: PC • PRICE: £34.99
• DEVELOPER: BLUE BYTE • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT
• ONLINE: LAN, DEATHMATCH, TECH RACE • SPECIAL: NO
• OTHER FORMAT: NO • CALL: 01932 838230 • PLAYERS: 1-6

THE SETTLERS: HERITAGE OF KINGS

A kingly RTS with a hint of *Warcraft* thrown in...

The cartoony *Settlers* we know and love is no more, replaced by a more serious hybrid of *Warcraft 3*, *Age of Empires* and *Rise of Nations*.

There's a good city-building system with the usual raft of technological breakthroughs and enhancements, but combat is where *Heritage of Kings* falls short, with a lack of rigid group formations and poor pathfinding. You simply engage the enemy in a royal rumble and cross your fingers.

There's oodles of depth, but it seems to have lost its quirky charm. GM

Liverpool vs. Everton was a hotly contested match even in medieval times.

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 65%

Reasonably good, but *Settlers* fans might be in for a shock.

N-GAGE
• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: N-GAGE • PRICE: £29.99
• DEVELOPER: HUDSON • PUBLISHER: NOKIA
• ONLINE: BLUETOOTH VERSUS • SPECIAL: NO • OTHER FORMAT: NONE • CALL: +358 7180 34459 • PLAYERS: 1-2

KING OF FIGHTERS EXTREME

SNK's arcade classic comes to the palm of your hand

Every platform needs a good beat 'em up, so Kyo Kusanagi and the gang have arrived to knock some sense into N-Gage owners.

But this is a *KOF* tourney with a difference – the main mode is a 3-on-3 ruckus with the last team standing the winner. It looks superb, with instantly recognisable stars like Terry Bogard and the delectable Mai beating the crap out of each other amidst lush backdrops.

Extreme is also a pleasure to control using the N-Gage's D-pad. A sluggish frame rate taints things slightly, but the Bluetooth multi-player is a major bonus. GM

If a bloke wearing a karate costume tells you he's hard, agree with him.

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 80%

Not quite a classic, but a solid portable knockabout and a nostalgia trip in one.

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For further information: www.dec.org.uk

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PHONE NEWS

SIEMENS MYAY

Okay, this isn't a mobile phone. But in the absence of any really interesting new handsets, this brilliant little gadget is worth a mention. Due out in the spring, the MyAy is a tiny watchdog device equipped with audio, motion and temperature sensors. Simply put it in your room, car or games cupboard – if anyone walks past or makes a noise, it'll send an SMS directly to your phone warning of intruders. Convinced that your parents/girlfriend/siblings are going through your stuff while you're out? Here's your chance to find out.

GAME NEWS

CROC ON THE BLOCK

Cute reptilian platform hero, Croc, is coming to mobile phones, courtesy of top British developer, Morpheme. In *Croc Mobile Jungle Rumble*, the PlayStation star must save his pals from the evil Baron Dante, by slithering through 16 isometric levels. The visuals capture the bright cartoon-world feel of the console titles, and this game should offer more than just a loveable character with big teeth.

CANNONBALL FUN

The crazy Cannonball 8000 event – a 48hour race across Europe open to any driver mad enough to attempt it – is getting the mobile game treatment, courtesy of Kuju Wireless. The developer promises to capture the huge variety of cars locations and the twisted antics of the competitors. Sounds ambitious for a Java-based driving game, but we'll be able to judge for ourselves when it's released in the autumn. See www.cannonball8000.com for more info.

MOBILE TOP 5

THE FIVE TITLES YOU MUST HAVE ON YOUR JAVA PHONE!

1. **PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN**
   Another stunning platformer from GameLoft
2. **MICRO MACHINES**
   Teeny tiny retro racing
3. **ZOO TYCOON 2**
   Great mini-version of the big PC hit
4. **SENSIBLE SOCCER**
   Fabulous first-touch footie
5. **PUB FIGHT**
   Are you starting?

MOBILE MASTER

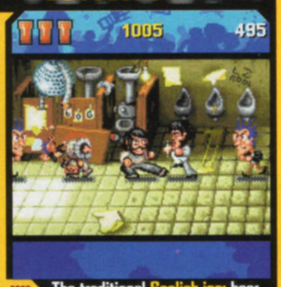
Still using your mobile to talk to people? That's so last century! Get up to date with *GM*'s look at mobile gaming!

PUB FIGHT

DEVELOPER:...LOMO

From *Pub Pool* to *Pub Fruity*, lomo's range of boozer-related titles has been hugely successful, offering addictive gameplay *and* loads of pub atmosphere. Now, the developer is bringing us all the thuggery of a pub ruck. You play publican Terry as he kicks and punches his way through four decades of drunken trouble-makers, taking down everyone from hippies and disco kings. Sounds like a beat-'em-up, but it's not – it's a multi-tasking puzzler. Each enemy type requires a different attack, so it's all about remembering what button to press at the right time. It's hectic stuff, and the daft characters, seedy backgrounds and Chaz and Dave soundtrack round things up nicely. Sorted.

Taking out disco queens in pub toilets? How unsavoury.



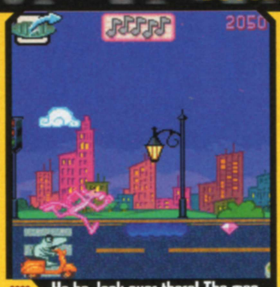
The traditional English inn: beer mats, random violence...

OVERALL > This is beer-soaked scum-smacking pub puzzle fun in all its glory. **89%**

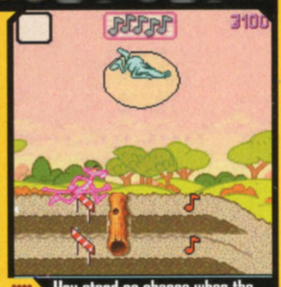
PINK PANTHER IN RARE PINK

DEVELOPER:...DIGITAL BRIDGES

Due to launch alongside the forthcoming movie, this offbeat racer pitches the panther against his old enemy 'The Man' (that egg-shaped bloke from the cartoon series) as they chase after rare butterflies. Don't ask. There are 10 courses to sprint through, each riddled with obstacles which you avoid by moving up or down the screen. It's also possible to pick up bombs and other hazards to lob at your opponent, and you can jump on scooters or rockets for some extra speed. It's hardly taxing stuff, and you'll get through *Rare Pink* pretty quickly, but the design chaps have got the look of the game just right – the characters and minimal, stylised locations match the original cartoon art perfectly. *Panther* fans and inexperienced gamers will love it.



Ha ha, look over there! The man has fallen over!



You stand no chance when the man has his scooter....

OVERALL > *Rare Pink* is cartoon fun that's very short-lived but stylish all the same. **79%**

BOOMERANG JOE

DEVELOPER:...IN-FUSION

There's only one sensible choice - play as a monkey!

Mobile game developers just love raiding the late '80s for ideas at the moment, and this newcomer from In-Fusio is another perky example. The aim is to guide one of three different characters upwards through a series of screens, chucking boomerangs at baddies and bosses, and picking up power-ups. And that's more or less it. The visuals are awash with retro styling taking us back to the days of simple animation – even the story has an old skool made-up-in-five-minutes simplicity. Unfortunately, it all moves rather sluggishly, and gets repetitive reasonably quickly. Even when you're playing as the monkey.

For a boomerang this thing does a surprising amount of damage.

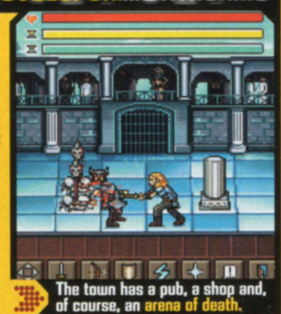
OVERALL > Yet more old skool platform action, with a hefty dose of retro nostalgia. **73%**

ERA OF EIDOLON: ORUMANT

DEVELOPER:...WATAGAME

Take that! Turn-based battle is what Eidolon is all about.

A massively multi-player RPG for mobile phones? Surely it's not possible. Well, it is. Kind of. *Era of Eidolon: Orumant* is a stripped down MMORPG that uses your phone's GPRS connection to hook you up to a persistent online realm filled with other players. Gameplay is entirely based around simple turn-based combat, there's no exploration, little plotting, and you'll constantly have to give permission for the game to go online to update the action. But this is an impressive technical achievement none-the-less. Copenhagen-based developer Watagame is planning eight further instalments to the Eidolon series, each offering new gameplay elements. Check out www.watagame.com for more info.



The town has a pub, a shop and, of course, an arena of death.

OVERALL > Ambitious, but terms of gameplay it's still rather limited. **80%**

WIN £5,000!

IF WE COULD TURN BACK TIME...

We'd spend more of it practising to win cash!

Mobile phones – brilliant. Retro games – even more brilliant. So what better way to liven up your next bus journey than playing some classic games the way they used to make them – fast, tough, and fun? It couldn't be easier, thanks to the nice chaps at The Mob. But that's not all.

Every month the Games Arena picks a special featured game for a tournament and invites you to send in your highest score. The winner of each month's challenge bags £500, but the best bit is that in December, all the winning gamers will go to London for a chance at scooping £5,000 in their Champion Of Champions tournament.

Don't fancy joining up and entering the tournament? No problem – all their content's available to download on a pay-as-you-go basis. To be in with a chance at that cash, though, you'll need to be a full-on member of The Mob. So what are you waiting for? Text MASTER to 87021 to get started right now, and £5,000 could be yours!

JOIN THE GAMES ARENA TODAY! TEXT MASTER TO 87021 TO GET STARTED!

RETRO SPECIAL!

ASTEROIDS

Atari's *Asteroids* richly deserves to be called a 'gaming classic'. First launched in 1979, it became a massive arcade hit with its simple graphics and addictive gameplay. The aim of the game is to destroy as many asteroids as possible with your photon torpedoes, while trying to avoid the hostile fire from UFOs and satellites.

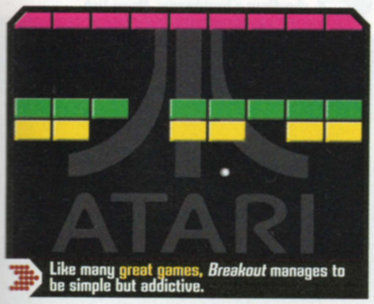
The bigger the asteroid the bigger the points score, but watch out for the debris.

The control system is unique as you have to control the ship's thrust.

There's a hyperspace option which gets your ship out of trouble in a blink of an eye.

BREAKOUT

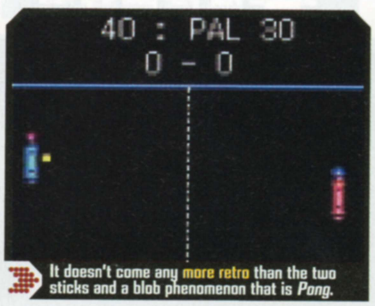
Block-busting larks with another Atari legend. The aim of the game's simple – bat a little ball into some bricks – but with a bit of spin and the right angle, it's possible to form massive combos, destroy entire rows at a go and rack up massive scores.



Like many great games, *Breakout* manages to be simple but addictive.

PONG

Yes, *Pong*. The original tennis game's back, and it's still a moon-mile more exciting than watching Tim Henman lose in Wimbledon. Four points wins you a game, two out of three games takes the match and puts you through to the next opponent.



It doesn't come any more retro than the two sticks and a blob phenomenon that is *Pong*.

MONOPOLY

The best-selling board game, *Monopoly*, makes its debut on mobile devices. Build up your property empire by buying and trading some of the world's most famous streets, but don't forget to keep some money aside for rent, taxes and the dreaded fines.

The classic board game available any time you're bored! Live the dream.

AND THE REST

The Mob add more downloadable games every week, with big-name games such as *Prince Of Persia* and *T.H.U.G.* racked up next to classic arcade titles. They've also got scoreboards for all their games, as well as news, reviews and hints for the latest mobile games.

Check out the latest games and loads more at the website www.mob.tv

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themob

CHEAT MASTER

QUALITY CHEATAGE SINCE 1993

Tom East – he may look strange, but he knows his games. Listen to his pearls of gaming wisdom.

Still looking for those oysters in *San Andreas*? Well, your job has just got a lot easier with the new infinite lung capacity cheat. That's just the best of a new batch of *GTA* cheatage that we've uncovered. And with hot new *Resident Evil 4* and *KOTOR 2* cheats, it's another great month for tips. Next month: the freshest *Metal Gear Solid 3* secrets.

The latest cheats and tips just how you like 'em – fresh!

TIP OF THE MONTH

GTA SAN ANDREAS PS2

- ☑ INFINITE LUNG CAPACITY
- ☑ HOPPING TAXIS
- ☑ FLYING CARS

Enter these box fresh *GTA* cheats at any time while playing.

CARS FLY
↑, ↓, L1, R1, L1, →, ←, R1, ←.

GANGS ON EVERY STREET
R2, ↑, R1, L1, ←, R1, L1, R2, →, ↓.

INFINITE LUNG CAPACITY
↓, ←, L1, ↓, ↓, R2, ↓, R2, ↓.

LESS TRAFFIC
⊗, ↓, ↑, R2, ↓, △, L1, △, ←.

SPAWN DOZER
R2, L1, L1, →, →,↑, ↑, ⊗, L1, ←.

TAXIS HAVE NITROUS AND CAN BUNNY HOP (PRESS L3)
↑, ⊗, △, ⊗, △, ⊗, □, R2, →.

FAST CARS
↑, L1, R1, ↑, →, ↑, ⊗, R2, ⊗, L1.

AIM YOUR WEAPON WHILE DRIVING
↑, ↑, □, R2, →, ⊗, R1, ↓, R2, ◎.

ORANGE SKY
→, →, R2, R1, ←, □, □, L1, R2, ⊗.

ORANGE SKY AND TIME FROZEN AT 21:00
←, ←, R2, R1, →, □, □, L1, R2, ⊗

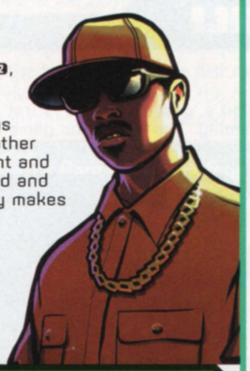
CLOWN AROUND
The only vehicles on the streets are Hotknifes, Baggage Handlers, Tugs, Hotdogs, Mr Whoopees, Pizzaboys, BF Injections, Caddys, Quads, Go Karts, Movers and Banditos. Even better all the pedestrians are either food service workers or clowns.
△, △, L1, □, □, ◎, □, ↓, ◎

Use the aiming when driving cheat and CJ will lean out of his car when doing a drive-by.

Earn easy cash with the flying car cheat. Land after flying around for an insane stunt bonus.

SANDSTORM
↑, ↓, L1, L1, R2, R2, L1, R2, R1, R2

Not the same as the Foggy Weather cheat. It's bright and windy. The wind and limited visibility makes flying more challenging.



MEGA PUNCH
↑, ←, ⊗, △, R1, ◎, ◎, ◎, R2

Try our cheat and take to the streets in your fearsome bulldozer.

Scared of clowns? Get revenge by punching their red noses. While dressed in a swimsuit.

MERCENARIES

PS2 XBOX CUBE

- ☑ INFINITE HEALTH
- ☑ BLUEPRINT UNLOCKABLES
- ☑ SUPER-POWERED WEAPONS

PLAYGROUND OF DESTRUCTION MODE
Complete the game, then catch the Ace of Spades – General Song. Now save. Then load the same game again and you can start a new game with all your money and support items.

Vaulting on a tank's turrett. Now that's what we call extreme sports.

BLUEPRINT UNLOCKABLES
All you have to do to is collect a certain number of blueprints to unlock secret stuff.

1: All C4 Crate Drop
5: Sniper Rifle Drop
10: Stringer Supply Drop
15: Anti-tank Supply Drop
20: Mafia Heavy Soldier skin cheat
30: NK Elite Soldier skin cheat
40: Prototype Supply Drop
50: NK Number Card (Spades) skin cheat
60: $100,000
70: $100,000
80: $250,000
90: $250,000
100: $500,000
110: Han Solo skin cheat crate

NATIONAL TREASURE UNLOCKABLES
Collect some National Treasure to unlock secret stuff.
1: Chinese Scout Delivery
5: H3 Delivery
10: Chinese Fuel Truck Delivery
20: Indiana Jones skin cheat
30: Civilian Doctor skin cheat
40: Civilian Prisoner skin cheat
50: Ace of Diamonds skin cheat
15: $50,000
60: $100,000
70: $100,000
80: $250,000
90: $250,000
100: $500,000
110: SKU Elite Soldier skin cheat

MONUMENT REWARDS
Collect some Monument bounties to unlock secret stuff.
10: North Korean ZSU 57 Anti Air Delivery
20: $250,000

SKU LISTENING POST REWARDS
Collect some Monument bounties to unlock secret stuff
10: Health Crate Supply Drop
20: Civilian Baggage Carrier Delivery
30: Mafia MD-350 Scout Delivery
40: NK Numeric Card (Hearts) skin cheat code
50: Pilot skin cheat code
55: $250,000

INFINITE HEALTH
Go to the PDA Factions screen and press ↑, ↓, ↑, ↓, ←, →,←, →.

ALL SHOP ITEMS
Go to the PDA Factions screen and press ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↑,←, →, →.

SUPER-POWERED WEAPONS & PORTABLE AIR STRIKE
First, verify all 52 cards. The you'll find that a cheat crate will be unlocked. This will provide you with a code for the weapons and air strike.

GREATEST CHEATS EVER!

DRIVE AROUND TOWN AS SMITHERS

THE SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE PS2 XBOX CUBE

PUBLISHER: ..... EA
YEAR OF RELEASE: 2001

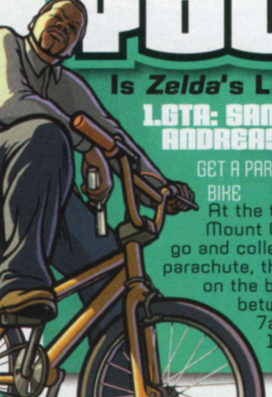
The game itself is a total *Crazy Taxi* rip-off, but if you're going to rip off a great arcade game, why not do it with *The Simpsons*? Especially when you get to cheat and drive around town as great characters such as Waylon Smithers.

PLAY AS SMITHERS
PS2 Hold L1 and R1 and press △ twice and □ twice.
XBOX Go to the Option screen, hold L and R and press B, B, Y, Y
CUBE Go to the Option screen, hold L and R and press B, B, Y, Y

Mr C Montgomery Burns gives his new chauffeur a backhander. Boom tish.

YOUR TOP 10 TIPS

Is *Zelda*'s Link buried in a grave in *Final Fantasy I*? Try our cheat to find out...



1.GTA: SAN ANDREAS PS2

GET A PARACHUTE BIKE
At the top of Mount Chiliad, go and collect a parachute, then get on the bicycle between 7am and 12am.

Now you'll start a race. Then ride the bike off the edge of Mount Chiliad, jump off and pull out your parachute. Now you will be put back on the top of the mountain, but you will be on your bike with a parachute open. Now you will never fall off your bike.

UNLIMITED AMMO
If you use one of the weapons cheats (see the tips book for these) more than 25 times, the rocket launcher, sub-machine gun, pistol and flamethrower will have unlimited ammo.

GET A JUMBO JET
The jumbo jet style plane (the AT-400) in Las Venturas Airport. Look on the map and go to the white rectangular building in the bottom right corner of the map. When you walk towards it the shutters will open and there is an AT-400 inside

Dale Eastom, Tipton

2.FIFA 2005 PS2

YOUR KEEPER ALWAYS CATCHES THE BALL
When the opposition take a corner, press L2 and R2 and your keeper will always catch the ball. Unlike Jens Lehman. Or Roy Carroll. Or Jerzy Dudek. What's wrong with Premiership goalies these days?)

Alex Assinder, West Midlands

3.WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW PS2

TITLE BELTS
Looking through the create-a-belt menu, I noticed that the following centre plates were from actual title belts from different federations in the United States.
Plate 1: WWF Heavyweight 1998-2001
Plate 2: WCW World Heavyweight
Plate 3: WWF Intercontinental 1980s – 1990s

I (that's me, Tom East) once got kicked out of a Norfolk golf club for wearing shorts in summer. Goodness knows what they'd make of the outfit this lass is wearing. Then again, she is supposed to be an outlaw.

Want to unlock Shadow? You'll have to be some kind of Superstar. Like Jamelia. Or not.

SEGA SUPERSTARS PS2

- ☑ NEW MODES
- ☑ NEW SONGS
- ☑ PLAY AS SHADOW

NIGHTS MODE
Complete the Nights game on Easy, Medium, and Hard mode.

FREE MODE
Complete three levels in Puyo Pop Fever, play as Shadow.

SHADOW
To play as Shadow in the *Sonic the Hedgehog* games, complete every level on Easy, Medium and Hard modes.

UNLOCK SIX EXTRA SEGA SONGS
Get a Perfect score in all the Samba De Amigo songs.

THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY PS2

- ☑ UNLOCKABLE CHARACTERS
- ☑ SECRETS

Find out how to get to these unlockable characters

UNLOCK YURI IN FREE ROAM MODE
Complete the Jimmn catch the Ace of Spades – General Song. No

UNLOCK JAMAHL IN FREE ROAM MODE
Complete 'Your man with the tattoo' level.

OUTLAW GOLF 2 PS2 XBOX CUBE

- ☑ MORE COURSES
- ☑ MORE CHARACTERS

UNLOCK EVERYTHING
Create a player and enter I Have No Time as your name to unlock all courses, character, clubs, events, and movies.

ALL COURSES
Create a player and enter release all courses as your name.

ALL CHARACTERS
Create a player and enter release all golfers as your name.

ALL CLUBS
Create a player and enter release all clubs as your name.

INFINITE BEATING TOKENS
While playing a game in exhibition mode, hold L1 and press L2, L2, R2, R2, A.

PERFECT SHOTS
Start playing a game in exhibition mode and when you're aiming, hold L1 and press X, O, X, X, O, L2, O, X.

BIG HEADS
Start playing a game in exhibition mode and when you're aiming hold L1 and press O, X, O, A, SELECT.

BIG CHESTS
While playing a game, hold L1 and press O, ↑, ↑, O, A, ↑.

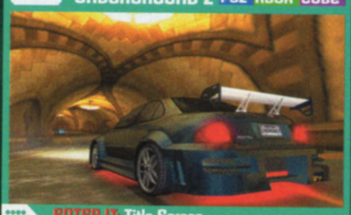
BOUNCING BALLS
Start playing a game in exhibition mode and when you're aiming, hold L1 and press ↑, ↑, X, ↑, ↑, O, ↑, ↑, R.

Complete missions to unlock secret characters in *The Getaway: Black Monday*.

TOP 20 CHEATS

Oh cheaty cheats how we adore thee! Check out our updated UK Top 20...

01 NEED FOR SPEED: UNDERGROUND 2 PS2 XBOX CUBE



ENTER IT: Title Screen
PS2 ←, ←, →, O, O, →, L1, L1
XBOX ←, ←, →, A, A, →, L, R
CUBE ←, ←, →, X, X, →, L, R.
WHAT IT DOES: $1000 Cash.

02 GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS PS2

ENTER IT: Enter it at any time R1, R2, L1, X, ←, →, ↑, ←, →, ↑
WHAT IT DOES: $250,000, full health and ammo.

03 FIFA 2005 PS2 XBOX CUBE

SELECT IT: Kiraly, Le Saux, Scimeca, Unsworth, Edworthy, De Pedro, Izzet, Oakley, Johnson, Vakubu, Fowler.
WHAT IT DOES: Bargain Premiership Team.

04 THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN PS2 XBOX CUBE

ENTER IT:
PS2 A, A, A, A.
XBOX Y, Y, Y, Y.
CUBE Y, Y, Y, Y.
WHAT IT DOES: Very Fast Cars.

05 THE INCREDIBLES PS2 XBOX CUBE GBA

ENTER IT: Pause the game, select the secrets option and type inSmartBomb.
WHAT IT DOES: Destroys all nearby enemies and items.

06 PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN PS2 XBOX CUBE PC

DO IT: Collect all 9 lifelines to get the water sword.
WHAT IT DOES: With the water sword you can beat Dahaka and get the alternative ending.

07 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4 PS2 XBOX

DO IT: When the ball crosses the line, pause before your player celebrates. Watch a replay.
WHAT IT DOES: Each time you watch a replay a goal is added to your score.

08 LORD OF THE RINGS: THE THIRD AGE PS2 XBOX CUBE GBA

ENTER IT: Complete game in Hard mode.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks Captain of Lothlorien, The Elf Haldir.

09 CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR PS2 XBOX CUBE

ENTER IT
PS2 Plug a second controller into the PS2. Go to the level select screen. Hold the ↑ button on the second controller, and then press START, SELECT, SELECT, O.
XBOX CUBE Do the same as for PS2, but hold ↑ and press START, BACK, BACK, X
WHAT IT DOES: Level Select.

10 FOOTBALL MANAGER 2005 PC

ENTER IT: Sign Robinho from Santos.
WHAT IT DOES: Top Class Player.

11 11: THE URBZ: SIMS IN THE CITY PS2 XBOX CUBE

ENTER IT: PS2 Enter O, L1, L2, R2, L1, A, L1, L2, X, O. XBOX Enter ← and Y, and A + X for the cheat gnome. Enter + ↑ + → + X + ←. CUBE Enter + L + Z + A + X + ← for the cheat gnome. Enter B + ← + X + R + L for Power Socials.

12 SONIC HEROES PS2

ENTER IT: Hold X and A just after selecting a character in two-player mode.
WHAT IT DOES: Metal Characters in two-player mode.

13 TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005 PS2 XBOX CUBE

ENTER IT: THEGIANTOYSTER.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks all golfers and courses.

14 GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT PS2 XBOX CUBE

ENTER IT: ↓, ←, ↑, ←, →, ↓, ←, ↑.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks all multi-player skins.

15 THE SIMS 2 PC

ENTER IT: Press CTRL + Shift + C to get the cheat window up, then enter this: intProp maxNumOfVisitingSims 8
WHAT IT DOES: Invites people to your party.

16 SPIDER-MAN 2 PS2 XBOX CUBE

ENTER IT: Type in HCRAYERT as your name, using a memory card with no *Spider-Man 2* saves on it.
WHAT IT DOES: You get 40% completion, 21,000 Hero points with swing speed and Win Zip upgrades, and Big Game Hunter, Alien Buster, Shock Absorber.

17 WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW PS2

ENTER IT: Complete every Legend Challenge.
WHAT IT DOES: Invites people to your party.

18 THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY PS2

ENTER IT: At the extras menu press ↓, ←, ↑, ←, →, ↓, ←, ↑
WHAT IT DOES: Double Health.

19 LORD OF THE RINGS - BATTLE MIDDLE-EARTH PC

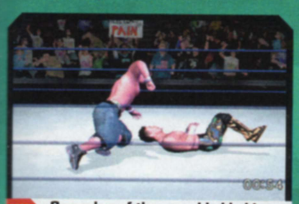
ENTER IT: When playing as Merry or Pippin, throw a pebble. Then when the pebble appears, right click on another enemy.
WHAT IT DOES: Glitch that enables you to chuck a double pebble.

20 SHREK 2 PS2 XBOX CUBE

ENTER IT
PS2 Press START during game play to access the Scrapbook and enter: ←, ↑, X, O, ←, ↑, X, O, ←, ↑, X, O, ↑, ↑, ↑, ↑.
XBOX Press Start during game play to access the Scrapbook and enter: ←, ↑, A, B, A, B, ←, ↑, A, B, ←, ↑, A, B, ←, ↑.
CUBE Press Start during game play to access the Scrapbook and enter: ←, ↑, A, X, A, X, ←, ↑, A, X, ←, ↑, A, X, ↑, ↑.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlock all levels.

Plate 4: WWE Intercontinental 1990s – Now
Plate 5: ECW World Heavyweight
Plate 7: WWF Light Heavyweight
Plate 11: NWA World Heavyweight

Anonymous



A member of the crowd holds his banner up at the right time. Pain...

4. CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR PS2 XBOX CUBE

A HUGE APPLE
Okay, along with the dancing Nazis secret, this is very strange as not only do you get to drive into a huge apple, but when you do, you'll find a UFO. At the beginning of Operation Little Saturn, in the Russian campaign (it's one of the tank levels), turn immediately to your left and find a single tree (with no leaves) sitting on the slope of the embankment. Move to the right of the tree and drive right through the wall. From here, turn left and drive along the road that goes around the mountain.

Continue down the road and you should see a large red apple in the distance. If you continue to drive into the apple you'll find the UFO.

John Hilbridge, Newcastle

5. HALO 2 XBOX

LEGENDARY CLOAK
On the level Delta Halo in Legendary mode you can get a cloak which is really good for getting past difficult bits further on in the game.

To do this you need to get an Envy skull on the mission, Push through Covenant Ruins. When you first come out of the big building, turn left and there should be a turret on top of the wall. Follow that wall all the way down and get on top of it (there should be a huge rock blocking the doorway). Jump on top of this rock, turn left and look up to see another ledge that you should be able to jump on.

Once there, you'll see another ledge. Chuck a grenade at your feet and jump before it explodes to get up there. Now you should see two red elites and in between them there is a skull. Hold X over it to pick it up and the word Envy will appear on screen.

Anonymous

Cheat Master

BIG BALLS
Start playing a game in Exhibition mode and, when you're aiming, hold L1 and press ↑, ↑, ↑. Select in aiming mode. Repeat this code to increase its effect.

SMALL GOLF BALL
While playing a game, aim and hold L1 and press ↓, ↓, ↓, select in Aiming mode. Repeat this code to increase its effect.

Check out the Russians breakdancing in *Call of Duty*'s dancing soldiers secret.

CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR PS2 XBOX CUBE

- ☑ DANCING
- ☑ SECRETS
- ☑ CODES

DANCING NAZIS
In the Underground passage stage, go to the second level –

THE WESTERN THEATRE
After killing the last few Nazis you will see the exit through a hole in a brick wall. Instead of going through it, walk back past the last alcove and look for a boarded up tunnel in the next alcove on your left. Chuck five grenades at the tunnel. It will explode and you'll some Germans, a Brit and a Russian dancing around.

LEVEL SELECT
Plug another controller into the PS2, go to the Level Select Screen, hold ↑ on the second pad, press START, SELECT, SELECT, ⊙.

Want to unlock all the secret stuff? looks like you'll have to complete *LOTR* a few times.

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE THIRD AGE GBA

- ☑ NEW MISSIONS
- ☑ NEW CHARACTERS
- ☑ UNLOCKABLES

UNLOCK BALINS TOMB, AND GAP OF ROHAN MISSIONS
Complete the game once.

UNLOCK CAPTAIN OF LOTHLORIEN, THE ELF HALDIR
Complete the game on Hard mode.

UNLOCK THE FALL OF ISENGARD MISSION
Complete the game in Evil mode, on the Hard difficulty setting.

UNLOCK SAURON COMES AND THE BOARD IS SET MISSIONS
Complete the game in Greuling mode.

UNLOCK THE LAST ALLIANCE MISSION
Complete the Good mode on the Normal difficulty setting.

UNLOCK URUK-HAI COMMANDER OF MINAS MORGUL, SHAGRAT
Complete the evil mode on Easy, Normal or Hard difficulty settings.

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2 PC

- ☑ MORE MONEY
- ☑ UPGRADE YOUR CAR
- ☑ CODES

CHEAT CODES
Enter any of these codes before pressing Enter, then go to the main menu to activate the cheat.

$20,000 IN CAREER MODE
regmebaby

$1,000 IN CAREER MODE, RX-8 AND Skyline in quick race mode ordermebaby

$200 IN CAREER MODE
regmybank

LEVEL 1 PERFORMANCE UPGRADES
needperformance1

LEVEL 1 VISUAL UPGRADES
gimmevisual1

LEVEL 2 PERFORMANCE UPGRADES
needperformance2

LEVEL 2 VISUAL UPGRADES
gimmevisual2

BEST BUY VINYL
needmybestbuy

BURGER KING VINYL
gottahavebk

CINGULAR VINYL
gotmycingular

EDGE VINYL
gottaedge

OLD SPICE VINYL
goforoldspice

THE DOORS SPONSOR
opendoors

SNOOP DOGG SPONSOR
yodogg

CAPONE SPONSOR
wannacapone

SHINESTREET SPONSOR
shinestreetbright

CHINGY SPONSOR
gimmechingy

D3 SPONSOR
wintmyd3

DAVID CHOE SPONSOR
davidchoeart

JAPANTUNING SPONSOR
tunejapantuning

You can get some great sponsors in *Need For Speed: Underground 2*. Fancy having Snoop Doggy Dogg as your sponsor? Cheat and he can be yours. Or, you can be sponsored by lame '60s band, *The Doors*.

KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC 2 XBOX

- ☑ SECRET CHARACTERS
- ☑ SECRET SPEECH!

UNLOCKABLE CHARACTERS
DISCIPLE
Choose a Female character at the start, and meet the

Spoiler!

Get a handy mirror (make sure it's not attached to a wardrobe) to read this. Very *Harry Potter*!

PRINCE OF PERSIA WARRIOR WITHIN PS2 XBOX CUBE PC

If you have collected all nine hidden life upgrades, kill Dahaka with the water sword, and you will get the secret ending. If you can't be arsed to find all the upgrades, here's how it all ends. After killing the Dahaka, you escape from the Island Time with the Empress of Time, Kaileena. Then you'll see the pair of you descending below deck and it all gets a bit steamy. Then when The Prince and Kaileena get back, Mr Persia, you'll see that his home and village are burning. Then finally a mysterious shadowy figure turns up and ties to claim Kaileena for

THE HARDEST GAMES IN THE WORLD

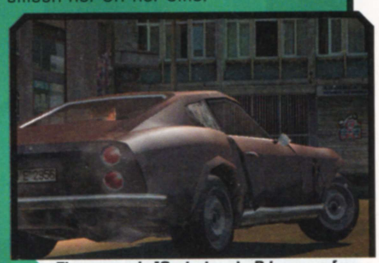
They're tough enough to make the facially tattooed weep!

DRIVER 3 PS2 XBOX

PUBLISHER: ATARI
RELEASED: 2004

Completing the original *Driver*, released in 1999 on PSone, was hard. Okay then, almost impossible. As if the Driving Test wasn't bad enough at the start, the final mission – The President's Run – was probably one of the toughest missions ever. Atari have continued the tough trend with *Driver 3*.

HARDEST BIT: The Chase mission where, as you'd imagine, you have to chase Calita's car through the streets of Istanbul. From the off, reverse, spin around and give chase. Then watch out for oncoming cars at the junction, but you must not come off the accelerator here. Then after a long straight, if she turns right to go through town, slam on the brakes and follow her, doing a handbrake turn on every bend. Then, when the bridge raises, get out of the car, leg it to the boat, get in and drive over the water. Now it gets a little bit easier and you just have to keep up with her on a motorbike. Then, when you get to the castle courtyard, smash her off her bike.



There are only 19 missions in *Driver*, so a few of them had to be hard.

YOUR TOP 10 TIPS

6. POKÉMON LEAF GREEN/ FIRE RED GBA

CRAZY ISLAND CHEAT
Go to the safari zone, pay 500p, go in and take one step forward. Then save and switch off your GBA. Turn it on again and go into the entrance. The man will say: "Are you leaving early?". Say no and repeat phase one. Now when you go back in again, the man will say: "Do you want to go in for 500p and join the hunt?" Say no to him and go to the cycling road. Cycle up and down until it says "Ding Dong, time's up". You will now be transported to the safari zone entrance and when you go out you will be on Crazy Island.

Michael O Keefe, Solihull

7. HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN PS2

SILENCED BALLERS
Get a silent assassin ranking on any mission to unlock silenced ballers.

SAWN OFF SHOTGUN
Get a silent assassin ranking on any two missions to unlock the sawn off shotgun.

Ben Heath, Ashford

8. GTA SAN ANDREAS

PS2 MANHUNT/ VICE CITY FIGURES
When you reach San Fierro, buy Zero's shop. Then instead of starting a mission, go inside the shop with a sniper rifle zoom switched on and look behind The counter. You will see *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City* Figures, including Ricardo Diaz, Tommy Vercetti and Lance Vance. Also at the back of the shop, you'll see some *Manhunt* figures such as the pig with the chainsaw and Cash.

Patrick McGowan, Via E-Mail

9. RUMBLE ROSES PS2

UNLOCK BONUS WRESTLERS
BECKY: Complete the story mode as Candy Cane

Rumble Roses has its knockers, but we quite like it.

CONSOLETATION ZONE

Saving stuck gamers since 1993!

You'll have to join the darkside to unlock some secret *Star Wars* characters.

disciple on Dantooine

HANDMAIDEN
Choose a male character at the start, and meet the Handmaiden on leaving the Telos Jedi academy.

HANHARR
Before the fight between Hanharr and Mira, join the dark side.

MIRA
Before the scrap between Hanharr and Mira, join either the neutral or the light side.

BONUS DIALOGUE
Complete the game a light character and again with a dark character, then start a new game to get more dialogue.

ACE COMBAT 5: THE UNSUNG WAR PS2

- ☑ FALKEN PLANE
- ☑ X-02 PLANE
- ☑ UNLOCKABLES

FALKEN
Collect the missing parts from missions 12a, 12b, 16a, 16b, and 27a to unlock the Falken.

X-02
Get all the other aircraft apart from the Falken.

RESIDENT EVIL 4 CUBE

- ☑ MINI-GAMES
- ☑ CHARACTERS

ASSIGNMENT ADA MINI-GAME
Complete the game once

UNLOCK MERCENARIES MINI-GAME
Complete the game

UNLOCK CHARACTERS IN THE MERCENARIES MINI-GAME

ADA WONG
Get a Four star rating in the Pueblo Mercenaries map.

ALBERT WESKER
Get a four-star rating in the Waterworld Mercenaries map.

HUNK
Get a four-star rating in the Island Commando Base Mercenaries map.

JACK KRAUSER
Get a four-star rating in the Castle Mercenaries map.

HARDER DIFFICULTY
Complete the game.

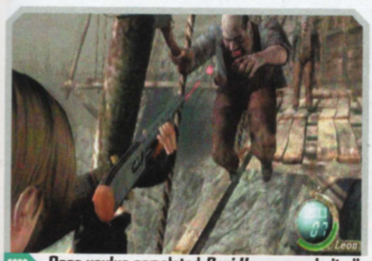
SPECIAL COSTUMES
Complete the game once, start a new one and there will be an option that enables Leon and Ashley to wear special costumes.

NEO CONTRA PS2

- ☑ MORE LIVES CODE

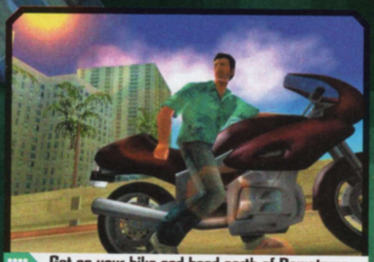
19 EXTRA LIVES

↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ↓, ●, ●, ●, ●, L3, R3



Once you've completed *Resi 4*, you can do it all over again. On Hard mode. Good luck.

Get 19 extra lives in *Neo Contra*. Not that you'll need them. You can complete it in 30 minutes!



Get on your bike and head north of Downtown to find the Hyman Condo property.

THE VICE IS RIGHT PS2

Dear *GM*, On *GTA: Vice City* I have got a few save points, but the one I'm looking for is the Hyman Condo. I think it costs around $14,000, but I don't know where it is.

Thomas Bamford, Pudsey

Just when we were expecting *San Andreas* questions, we get an old *Vice City* one. That must means our walkthroughs have been so good that you don't need any extra help! Anyway you're right – the Hyman Condo is $14,000. That's a bit of a bargain considering it's got three garages and a helipad. It is, unsurprisingly, near the Hyman Memorial Stadium, at the far northwest of the west island. Go one block east of the stadium and you'll find it.

SLAP SAURON PS2 PC XBOX CUBE GBA

Hi *GM*, Can you please help me in *Lord of the Rings: The Third Age*? I've been stuck on the Eye of Sauron for ages and I can't beat him. Please can you suggest a good strategy to beat him; characters, weapons, armour, anything... ?

Tony Spearing, Yeovil

You are on the final battle, so persevere. The best plan is to use Idrial to cast Frenzy, then Aura of the Valar. You must use Morgul Decay early on to destroy the Eye's Armor. Then attack with your most powerful skills. As for defence, when the casts Paralysis of Light, try Dwarven Ale on Berethor or use Idrial's Cleansing Waters to rid the anti-magic.

DOUBLE DASH PS2 PC XBOX CUBE GBA

Dear *GM*, Please can you help me on *The Incredibles*? I'm on the level after Dash's first one. I'm Mr Incredible and I've just done the first checkpoint, but the spinny things are ambushing me from a pipe.

Dan Stearn, Cleobury Mortimer

After the first set of heli-bots there is a generator. You need to slam jump it to stop the production of those damn heli-bots. If there are any left, just hit them. Now when the electric charge stops, leap up onto the big platform ahead, then smash the shield generator before the bridge covered by lightning.

GOT A PROBLEM? STUCK IN A GAME?

WE CAN HELP! EMAIL IT TO US AT GAMESMASTERTIPS@FUTURENET.CO.UK, SUBJECT CONSOLETATION OR WRITE TO CONSOLETATION ZONE, GAMESMASTER, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW. IF WE CAN'T HELP - YOU'VE HAD IT!

BAD CHEATS!

Where Tom gets tortured...

For Tom to get tortured, he has to do something really bad first. Like dig out a cheat that doesn't work. So if you find a bad cheat in the magazine, write to Bad Cheats, GamesMaster, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. Then we torture him.

DOCTOR CUTTER: Complete the story mode as Anaesthesia
JUDGMENT: Complete the story mode as Bloody Shadow
KILLER KHAN: Complete the story mode as Rigle
MISTRESS SPENCER: Complete the story mode as Miss Spencer
NOBLE ROSE: Complete the story mode as Evil Rose
ROWDY REIKO: Complete the story mode as Reiko Hinomoto
SERGEANT CLEMETS: Complete the story mode as Dixie Clemets
SHOWBIZ: Complete the story mode as Aisha
THE BBD: Complete the story mode as Makoto Aihara

Daniel Nelson, Portsmouth

10. FINAL FANTASY 1 & 2 GBA

LINK'S DEAD!
Visit Elfheim in *Final Fantasy 1*, press A on the lefthand tombstone behind the inn. It reads Here lies Link. Does this mean Link from the *Zelda* series?

Mike Newby, London

GM'S TOP 5 MOST WANTED TIPS

1. GTA: SAN ANDREAS We want to know about any cool secrets you've found. There are pins on a map in Toreno's hut. What do they mean?

2. METAL GEAR SOLID 3 It's out next month. Any great secret stuff would be very nice indeed.

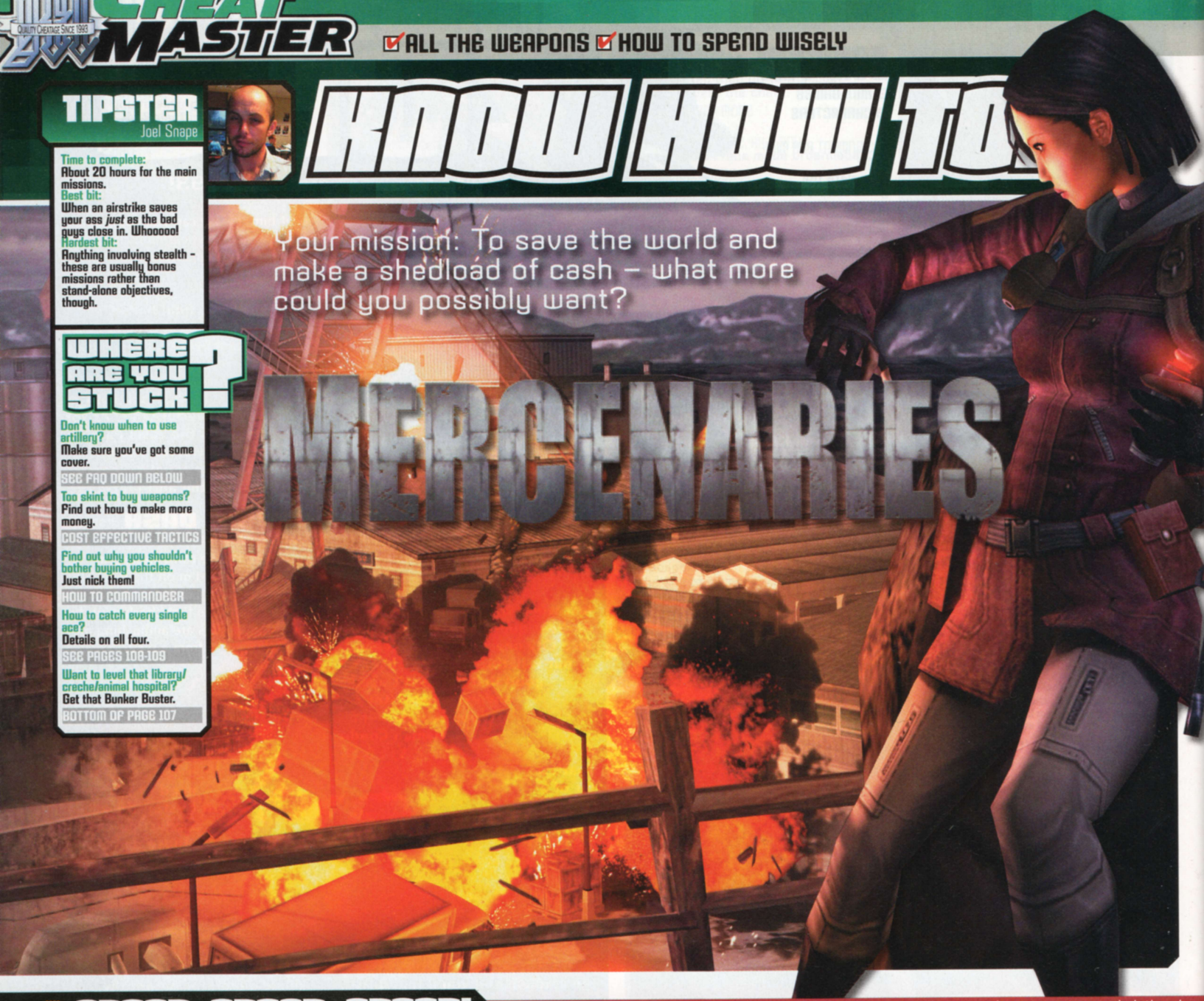
3. MERCENARIES Have you found any other cool characters besides Indian Jones and Han Solo?

4. RESIDENT EVIL 4 Unlocked any new costumes, discovered a way to get more ammo? Let us know.

5. KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC 2 We want good tips for getting high dark side points or any Easter eggs. There were loads of secrets in the last game...

As well as that lot, we want your best tips and secrets for any game. Email them to gamesmastertips@futurenet.co.uk or by post to My Top Ten Tip, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW. The best tip every month gets a free game on the format of your choice. But make 'em original!

KNOW HOW TO



Your mission: To save the world and make a shedload of cash – what more could you possibly want?

MERCENARIES

TIPSTER
Joel Snape

Time to complete:
About 20 hours for the main missions.
Best bit:
When an airstrike saves your ass *just* as the bad guys close in. Whoooooo!
Hardest bit:
Anything involving stealth – these are usually bonus missions rather than stand-alone objectives, though.

WHERE ARE YOU STUCK?

Don't know when to use artillery?
Make sure you've got some cover.
SEE FAQ DOWN BELOW

Too skint to buy weapons?
Find out how to make more money.
COST EFFECTIVE TACTICS

Find out why you shouldn't bother buying vehicles.
Just nick them!
HOW TO COMMANDEER

How to catch every single ace?
Details on all four.
SEE PAGES 108-109

Want to level that library/creche/animal hospital?
Get that Bunker Buster.
BOTTOM OF PAGE 107

SPEND, SPEND, SPEND!

If you're stuck on a mission, splash the cash – even if you're spending more than you get rewarded, there's n

MACHINE GUNS

AKs – the weapon of choice for taking out those pesky tank-mounted machine gunners.

Cost: Mostly free

AKs are good, SMGs are great – if you're going on a kill-crazy mission, it might be worth packing both. And always remember to do a manual reload in between waves of bad guys. For quick loading, stick with the gun that's used by the enemies you're attacking.

BEST USED FOR

There's not a lot you can't do with a machine gun. Unless you've got something very specific in mind, you shouldn't be without one.

SNIPER RIFLE

Don't want to upset the Chinese? Shoot them from half a mile away – they'll never know!

Cost: $8200

The covert ops combo – sniper rifle and suppressed pistol – is hopeless, since even Fiona'll be spotted the minute she starts shooting people. The best combo is AK and sniper rifle – that way you've got a machine gun if anyone surprises you.

BEST USED FOR

No point sniping the Aces – you still have to get up close to verify them – so it's best for taking out NK units to allow your backup to land.

GRENADES

Enemies'll spot grenades and run, so it's best not to give them too much time.

Cost: $7280 (Allies supply drop)

Tricky to hit anyone with unless you 'cook' them first – count to three before throwing so that the grenade explodes without bouncing. If you're out of frags and surrounded, flashbangs will stun enemies while you finish them with a machine gun burst.

BEST USED FOR

Though they're too weak to take buildings down efficiently, grenades will ruin fences – handy if you don't want to take the long way round.

C-4

You can always switch to machine gun while you're running, but it's not a good idea.

Cost: $8000 (Demolitions supply drop)

They are a complete pain in the arse to use, but easily the cheapest way of taking down bunkers, NK tunnels and so on. You should order up a Demolitions Crate if you are planning going on a property damage mission. You will thank yourself later.

BEST USED FOR

Sadly, you can't plant more than one charge at once, so you'll just have to ditch the explosives and run away. Tch, eh?

IN IT FOR THE MONEY

There are several ways to make money while you're not on a mission – as with *San Andreas*, it's best to do them as and when you get the opportunity, to make sure you've always got some readies.

Ah, a roof ornament. Why it's hidden behind some barrels is anyone's guess.

Would you really trust this bloke with $100,000? He's wearing a ski mask!

MAKING IT

SELLING VEHICLES: You can flog most 'commandeered' kit to the Mafia. It's mostly worth doing this with nice vehicles that you can't keep. For instance, if you've got a helicopter, you're going to lose it when you sign up for the Ace missions – so you might as well drop it off at Russkie HQ and make some quick cash...

CHALLENGES: These are marked with dollar signs on the map. The first few are really easy – so you can do them in between missions. Later on, you'll have to do rampages in the style of *GTA*. Just get yourself a sniper rifle before you attempt these, and you can pick off awkward stragglers easily.

CARDS: You don't have to do all of these to complete the game, but the lower-ranked 'deck' members are so easy to take out that you might as well if you're passing through.

FINDING SECRETS: Blueprints for W.M.Ds and military loot tend to be hidden around the main mission areas – check around crates and behind monuments for a chance at an easy $25,000.

SHOOTING STUFF: You get a bonus for any significant bit of North Korean kit blown up. If there's a big stash of ammo and a spare jeep lying about, you might as well take the opportunity. If you've done a mission and there's still a monument or portrait of General Song left standing, destroying it can bag you up to $50,000.

LOSING IT

COLLATERAL: In the world of *Mercenaries* it's a nice way of saying 'dead civilians'. You're penalised $10,000 per dead civvie or Allied trooper, and even more if you blow up a bus or something. Just commandeer their stuff and try not to run them over, it's not worth losing cash over it.

UPSETTING THE RUSSKIES: Sometimes the Merchant Of Menace refuses to sell you stuff – usually because you've just shot some Mafia personnel. It'll cost you at least $25,000 to get them back on side, so try to avoid it. Sometimes, though, you can just wait them out – do a couple of missions and check again to see if they're in a better mood.

BRIBES: Upset any faction too much and you'll have to run the gauntlet through their territory before bribing them a whopping $100,000 to get them to speak to you again. This is dangerous, and it really drains your cash, but sometimes it's inevitable. Certain Chinese or South Korean missions rely on you slaughtering hundreds of the opposing side, so be sneaky. You can usually minimise the bad feelings by using the sniper rifle/C-4 approach and not getting spotted. Unless a faction declares you a threat, you can always make them a bit happier by helping their troops out - just head for one of the boundaries of their territory and kill all the North Koreans that're hassling them. They seem to like that.

COST EFFECTIVE TACTICS

Strapped for cash? Here's how to bring in bounties on a budget...

TAKE 'EM ALIVE!

Bad guys stay cuffed, even if you die.

If you're outgunned as you approach a 'card', mow everyone down, then run in the direction of the boss while you hammer Ⓐ – then stop and take a verification snap. After which, just hit Medivac and get back to the Allied M.A.S.H. For more cash, the easiest way is to fling in a flash grenade, shoot all the target's henchmen, then get in quick, chin him and cuff him. The trickier way is to kill all his goons while he's still wandering about – risking killing him. The *much* trickier way is to dash in, chin the leader and then kill everyone else.

DISGUISE CRAZY

Those blue helmets? Never a good disguise.

If you're on a mission that forces you to trespass on Chinese, South Korean or Mafia Territory, *always* hang around one of the main junctions and nick transport to get in undetected. You still count as disguised if you're in an open-topped vehicle. If you've got an Allied gunner on the back, he'll fire, so crash the vehicle. Once you're in, retreat to a safe distance and wait for the 'Disguised' prompt. If you're in an NK vehicle and taking fire from your mates, tap Ⓐ to jump out and back in again – they'll let you pass.

NICKING VEHICLES

Strangely, this doesn't damage the tank at all.

By far the most important skill to learn. Buying vehicles is a waste of money as it's so easy to swipe them off bad guys. Always shoot the gunner first. If you're after a larger vehicle, such as a truck, give the windshield a spray, otherwise the driver'll simply run you over. Tanks are the best vehicles in the game when run at speed, but they're amazingly easy to nab – just Ⓒ up to the front of one and hit Ⓐ. As for choppers, watch for red dots on the radar and be ready to tap Ⓐ the second you see a circle appear around your merc.

RULE THE SKIES!

Well, you could swoop in and take him alive...

When you 'verify' the King Of Clubs, you'll get to use a chopper for personal use. After blowing up his missile silos, you're told to 'get up on the roof.' There are several bog-standard choppers on the ground that'll let you do this. Once you've got air superiority, wait for their whereabouts to come in via e-mail, scout the area at high altitude, then swoop in when the icon appears on your radar. NK troops won't shoot if you're flying one of their choppers, so you can land right next to the bounty - or kill him and all his buddies from the air.

point wasting time running away from a gang of NK because you're too cheap to buy bombs. You can only carry two guns at once, but there's lots of support waiting to help...

RPGS

Always look out for flammable stuff that'll cause chain reactions and save your rockets.

Cost: $8000 (Demolitions supply drop)

The all-purpose explosive. Anti-Aircraft or Anti-Tank rocket launchers are available – with lock-on facilities – but with a bit of practice, these are just as effective. There's usually one North Korean trooper carrying one in every unit - look out for them.

BEST USED FOR

Taking out vehicles (as long as you don't want to use them). Or taking out objectives you can't be bothered to C-4. This usually takes a few shots.

ARTILLERY

Careful you don't get shot while you're teeing up your laser-guided strike, though...

Cost: $56000

This is a semi-surgical bombing raid that's best for stationary targets. As with all laser-guided weapons, bear in mind that you need to avoid getting shot as you're lining it up. Otherwise you'll flinch and ruin your aim, leaving yourself wide open to enemy fire.

BEST USED FOR

Taking out awkward watchtowers or tunnel entrances – anywhere that's too full of troops to easily C-4, basically.

CLUSTER BOMB

Remember - satellite lock means never getting shot by the people you're murdering...

Cost: $55000

One of the first chances you'll get to use a satellite-guided weapon. You don't even need to be in the firing line to call your shots in. After the marker round goes in, you'll get a quick fusillade of smaller bombs - not quite enough to take down buildings, though.

BEST USED FOR

Well, in theory it's all about killing troops, but we've launched it at half a dozen NK and.seen it kill one. Rubbish, unless it's free.

THE BUNKER

This is about as close as you want to stand when you're ordering up a Bunker Buster.

Cost: $392000

Like being mates with God – the nastiest attack you can call down,. and sure to flatten any area it hits. If you can't be bothered with any of that shooting nonsense, it's easily the most efficient – and noisy – option. It's a bit on the expensive side, mind...

BEST USED FOR

When you're rich and sick of messing about on a 'kill everyone' mission, why not just ruin their day by bombing their entire camp flat?

01 Ace of Clubs Contract: Bring Down the House

This is your first Ace contract

Destroy NK Jammers

When you're dropped from the chopper, immediately concentrate fire towards the soldiers around the nearby camp. One of them is armed with an RPG and another has an anti-air rocket (he's the soldier crouching behind the soldier with the RPG). It's a good idea to pick up the anti-air rocket as it's highly likely that you will come under attack from helicopters at some point during the assault. When you've killed all the soldiers, check the camp area for some pick-ups (there are two health packs and some ammo) and get into the scout vehicle to disguise yourself as a North Korean.

Drive to the jammer that's located in the south-east corner of the island. Circle the building where the jammer is located and you should find a tank driving around the area. When the tank is on the west side of the building (the opposite side to the jammer), kill the gunner and hijack the vehicle. Use the tank to kill any troops on the ground (one of them has an RPG) and then destroy the jammer. If you feel like being destructive, send a few shells into the building to bring it to the ground. Next, destroy the jammer in the north of the island before moving to the final one on the west side of the island.

04. Kill the tank's gunner and then press Ⓐ while standing near the cannon to hijack it.

Destroy Song Tower

After destroying the final jammer, drive to the road that surrounds Song Tower and head around to the north facing side of the tower – but keep your distance or risk being blown apart by the grenade launchers that surround the tower. Stop somewhere near the track that led to the second jammer,

01. Kill the soldiers near the drop zone then disguise yourself in the NK scout vehicle.

02. You remain disguised until you're spotted by an NK officer.

03. Find the tank that's near the first jammer's position, and then hijack it.

05. Use the tank to destroy the jammers, but watch out for enemies armed with RPGs.

02. Ace of Diamonds Contract: The Guns of Kirin-Do

This Ace has a supergun that fires radioactive shells. Naughty boy.

Destroy Type 07 Supergun

Head along the track that leads from the drop-off point, but prepare for a fire fight with NK troops. Call for a cluster bomb attack to eliminate the hostiles. Down the track is a scout vehicle – this explodes, leaving behind four medipacks. Stay around this area killing any NK troops before proceeding. Continue along the track to the road and head east. You'll encounter a battle between NK and A.N. troops – hijack an NK tank from the area. Continue towards the 07 supergun, passing through the radiation zone.

01. The NK scout vehicle near the drop zone is booby trapped with C4. You can detonate it yourself by selecting the detonator from the support menu, or you can simply get close and wait for it to go boom!

02. You need an armoured vehicle - hijack the tank at the crash site east of the drop zone.

03. A blurry screen indicates high levels of radiation. Stay in the tank or you'll be fried.

04. Steer clear of the NK officer to stay disguised.

05. Park the tank on the right-hand side of the prototype gun.

06. Inside the prototype you'll see the supergun ahead of you.

Verify the Ace of Diamonds

Exit the prototype and return to the tank. When you get back into the tank you'll be disguised as an NK. Drive down the hill in front of the prototype (you'll make it down without sustaining any damage) and follow the road toward the Ace's position. The Ace is located within a base. Park nearby the base where you won't be spotted. Use the support menu and call in tank busters to destroy any hardware (there are a couple of tanks and an anti-air vehicle inside the base). Next, use the surgical strike to take out the barrack buildings on the base perimeter – these barracks are enemy spawn points, so destroying them is essential. Then wade in, get the Ace and call for extraction (lob the beacon on the road if there's nowhere in the base that's clear).

07. The Ace is inside a base - a direct assault is suicide.

08. Park near the base and use air strikes to destroy hardware.

09. Destroy barracks at the base to stop enemies

Use the Prototype to Destroy the Supergun

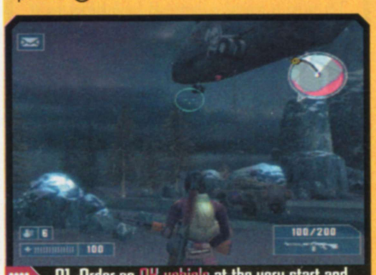
Follow the road that runs along the west side of the island until you reach the track that leads to the prototype supergun. There's a tank and some troops protecting the bottom of the track, but as long as you're disguised you can make it past them without any trouble – just drive around the right-hand side of the factory so that you aren't spotted by the NK officer. Follow the track all the way to the prototype weapon. Drive the tank beside the right-hand side of the prototype and stop where none of the NK troops can see you. Get out and head up the ramp at the front of the gun. Use the door on the side to man the weapon. Hit the supergun a couple of times to destroy it.

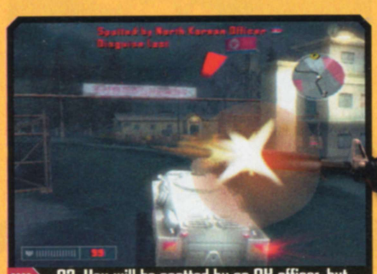
10. When the base seems quiet, run in and subdue the Ace and call for extraction before reinforcements

04. Ace of Spades Contract:

Investigate Prison

Get to the prison the sneaky way by disguising yourself as a North Korean. At the very start of the mission, exit the tank and order yourself an NK BRDM scout vehicle. Once it's dropped off, get in and follow the road. Don't worry if an NK officer spots you – just keep going towards the prison. When you reach the prison, drive as close as you can to the yellow marker, get out of the vehicle, stand in the marker and press Ⓐ.


01. Order an NK vehicle at the very start and simply drive disguised through the first area.


02. You will be spotted by an NK officer, but just keep driving to the objective marker.

Investigate Launch Site

After the cutscene with the President, exit the prison and get into the allied M3 APC vehicle that's parked outside. Follow the road through the gates and eliminate any resistance that you encounter. You'll reach an area with helipads – destroy everything in the area, but ensure that at least one of the helicopters remains intact. When there are no enemies left in the area, get into one of the helicopters. If there is no one

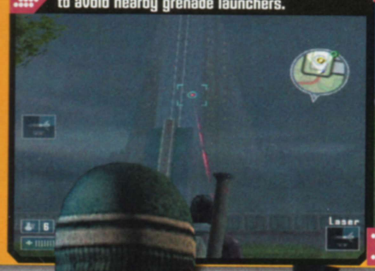
– let's make sure it's not your last.

get out of the tank and select the 'Bunker Buster Bomb' from the support menu. Target the tower with the laser until an allied plane drops the bomb on it and whole building collapses.

VERIFY THE ACE OF CLUBS

Although the building has been utterly annihilated, the Ace somehow manages to survive and makes a dash for it from the rubble. All you have to do now is chase after him on foot, subdue him and call for extraction.

08. To reduce Song Tower to a pile of rubble, call in a Bunker Buster Bomb airstrike.



07. Target the north facing side of Song Tower to avoid nearby grenade launchers.

09. Rather than rushing in to grab the Ace, wait for him to make a run for it over open

03. ACE OF HEARTS CONTRACT: GAMBIT

It's stealth time. If by 'stealth' you mean running around like a trigger-happy loon and destroying everything in your path, that is.

LOCATE THE ACE OF HEARTS

Approach the base and kill the soldier in the watchtower. To the left of the watchtower is a soldier armed with an RPG – kill him and then blast the fence with an RPG (there's one in the nearby supply crate if you don't have one). Enter the base and kill the soldiers in the north-east corner. Bash the crate near the base of the watchtower for a medipack and proceed into the complex.

You're advised to take it stealthy, but, to be honest, running and gunning is by the far the best approach. In the first area, take out the gun post in the north-east corner and kill any soldiers. If any soldiers trigger the alarm, you can either stand beside it and press w to deactivate it, or you can just blow it up to silence it for good. Make sure you arm yourself with a light MG before continuing further. Keep going through the various yards towards the Ace's location.

01. Your first target is the soldier in the watchtower. The RPG should be adequate.

02. Watch out for soldiers on the roof of the nearby building.

03. Destroy the alarm posts to stop enemies flooding the area.

04. Destroy alarm posts, then target any enemy gun nests.

05. The radar shows that the Ace is nearby, but there's only an ambush waiting for you on the other side of the doorway. Luckily, the ambush only consists of two soldiers, so don't worry too much.

Rather than engaging the enemies, simply run past them and head straight up the steps.

06. Don't stop on the overhead walkway – just run and gun.

07. On the rooftop look out for a soldier armed with an RPG.

08. There's a videotape near the Ace – grab it for a bonus.

PREVENT ACE OF HEARTS FROM ESCAPING

When you reach the Ace's position there will be some soldiers waiting for you – the Ace knew you were coming! Ignore them and run straight up the steps and along the elevated walkway outside. Keep running along the walkway to engage any troops that appear. Follow the walkway all the way to the end and kill the soldiers that are there (they've got RPGs). Head up the slope and continue to the rooftop. Ahead of you as you reach the rooftop is a soldier armed with an RPG – take him out first. Quickly subdue the Ace before he runs to the chopper. Kill any soldiers on the rooftop and then take out the NK chopper that's buzzing around – sustained fire from your light mg will bring it down easily enough. Before you call for extraction make sure you collect the videotape that is near the Ace's position behind the sandbags.

E ACE OF SPADES

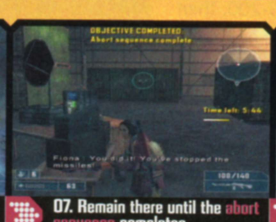
At last, it's time to round up the most dangerous man on the planet, General Song. Good luck...

around you will immediately be disguised as an NK, so you can take off without having to worry about the SAMs that are positioned in the area. Now simply fly to the launch site.

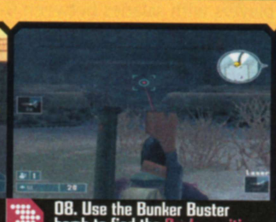
ENTER ABORT CODES

Fly towards the next objective point and land behind the hangar. Run inside the hangar and enter the abort codes (you must stand inside the marker until the codes have been entered). Bash the nearby crate and collect the anti-air launcher.

06. Land behind the hangar to avoid heavy firepower.



07. Remain there until the abort sequence completes.



08. Use the Bunker Buster bomb to find the Ace's position.

09. Instead of chasing the Ace, wait for him to appear before attempting to subdue him.

VERIFY THE ACE OF SPADES

Exit the hangar from the back, run around the side and towards the front. Jump from the roof of the troop bunker in the corner to get into the missile launch area. Now work your way towards the Ace's position, using C4 to get through the fences. However, before you can reach the Ace you'll need to destroy the nearby jammer – throw grenades over the wall at it until it blows up. Select the bunker buster from the support menu and target the door that the Ace is behind. When the dust has settled, hang back and wait for the Ace to emerge. Subdue him and take him down. Set the extraction beacon somewhere on the south edge of the missile launch area and wait for the chopper to arrive.

03. Pull up right beside the prison, then step into the ring.

04. Apart from the 'copters, destroy all at the helipad area.

05. To be disguised, get in a chopper without being spotted.

10. There are lots of SAMs in the area, so choose your extraction point very carefully.

KNOW HOW TO...

TIPSTER
Dan Dawkins

Time to complete:
Several happy months.
Best bit:
When you finally sign a star player and the goals start to flow. And, oddly, struggling with crap players is a perverse thrill.
Hardest bit:
Breaking out of the Second Division with default players on Five Star difficulty level. Or the UEFA cup final.

WHERE ARE YOU STUCK?

In Season One
It's all about formations.
LOOK BOTTOM RIGHT

Finding bargains
You need to use the Search function with precision
SEE BELOW

Making players sign
Star players need to be tempted to the club with attractive deals.
SKIP TO PAGE 111

Developing players
You need to master the development curves to turn your youth players into superstars.
ON THE RIGHT OF 111

Buy the hidden bargains, maximise player potential and build the ultimate team!

WHAT IS THE MASTER LEAGUE?

It's the ultimate single-player challenge – combining *Pokémon*'s 'Gotta catch 'em all' mentality, with the tactical depth of *Rome Total War* and the playability of... erm... *PES 4*. You guide a team of unknowns from Division Two obscurity to UEFA Cup glory, juggling resources, shrewd transfers and cunning tactics. Like real football, spend too much money on big players without winning a trophy, and it's game over.

TOP TIP 1
If your players have blue or grey condition arrows, use the Regulate Condition option. Just keep the ball for 30 seconds or, ideally, score for a huge boost – all players will be at least on green. This is vital before a big game.

Want to cheat? Don't! But... shhh... you can use *PES* points to buy Classic teams from the *PES* shop by unlocking star players such as Pele in the *Master League*.

STEP ONE: SEASONS 1-2

If you're a decent *PES 4* player (i.e. can beat the CPU on level three by a couple of goals), then go for a Four/Five Star difficulty – you'll thank yourself later. If you're really good (i.e. can thrash the CPU on Five Stars) then buy the secret six stars option from the PES shop – in the Options Menu.

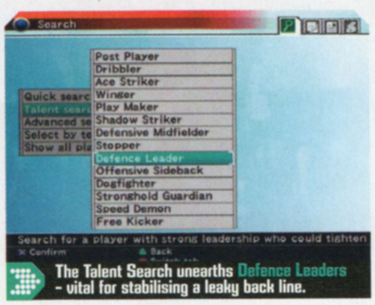
You've three initial options:

1) ML Default Mode – where you start with the default ML players (like Barota, Ximilez and Matt etc).

2) Create Original Team – where you start with default ML players plus *three* established players.

3) Match Mode Players – where you start with the club's real life players (e.g. Arsenal start with Henry, Pires, Viera etc).

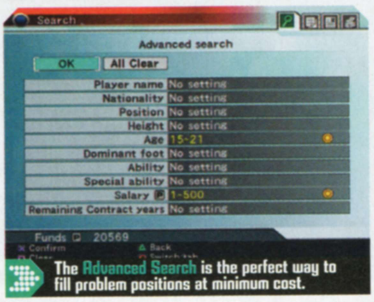
We recommend Original Mode and Five Star difficulty.



The Talent Search unearths Defence Leaders – vital for stabilising a leaky back line.

HOW DO I SPOT A BARGAIN?

It's simple – go to the Advanced Search option and perform a search for all players with salaries between 0-200, then sort the list (tap ◻) by Position and scroll through methodically. You'll find approximately seven players with stats in the 80s. As a general rule, try to sign young players (17-20) so they improve as they play, great old players (31+) with lesser wage demands, or players from Asia – who are really good but they often demand lower wages, such as Song (200), Nakata (200) and Seol Ki Hyeon (200).



The Advanced Search is the perfect way to fill problem positions at minimum cost.

WHICH PLAYERS DO YOU SWAP OUT/IN?

Swap out the players with the highest wages. This gives you 1550 *PES* points to spend on established players' wages. Spread the cash between one reasonably high profile star and two good journeymen, rather than on one superstar. It's best to a) spend all your money on attackers, or b) build a decent spine (one CBT/DMF, one OMF and one CF/WF).

TOP TIP 2
If you're winning 2-0 with 20 minutes left, always bring on three growth players so they can build stats without risking team results. Try to keep a strong spine, mind, so the opposition can't fight back.

SEASON 1 FAQ

WHAT'S THE BEST FORMATION IN MY FIRST SEASON?
Pick a formation to remedy your deficiencies. For example, if you're having problems scoring, but are tight at the back, go for a 3-4-3. If you're shipping goals all over the place, go for a 3-5-2 with two DMFs (like the Default Setting), or an ultra defensive 4-5-1 and play on the counter attack. Your default players are good enough to keep clean sheets in D2, so spend your cash on fast CFs (to play on the counter attack), creative OMFs (to pick the pass) and tall DMFs (to win headers and recycle the ball).

WHY CAN'T I WIN THE LEAGUE?
You've got too many crap players. So, complete a whole season, try to scrape enough *PES* points, keep building up your growth players (substitute SMF Matt improves quickly) and buy carefully in the close period to mount a challenge in Season 2. You need five or six decent players before the wins start flowing.

TRANSFER TARGETS (SEASON 1-2)

These bargain players (Salary 0 –750) offer the best performance/cost ratio during your cash-strapped first two seasons in charge. Look out for *GM*'s top picks, marked with a (*) – with key comments in brackets.

GK
Itandje 386* (best value for money)
Bucek 567

CBT/SB
Contreras 449* (can play SB, very strong, agile)
Balde 450 (strong, good in the air)
O'Shea* 579 (strong, two footed, can play DMF)
Sutto 602* (95+ defence rating, dependable, old)
Mihajilovic 595 (95+ free kick rating)

SB
Arce 644 (great free kicks, young)
Paulo Ferreira 500 (dependable)

DMF
Song 200* (good stats, can play SB, SMF, OMF and DMF!)
Nakata 200 (great passing, but a bit weak)
Essien 515 (athletic)
Heitinga 527* (young, good and ever improving)
Toure 635 (strong, good in air)

OMF
Rooney 709* (all rounder, ever improving, must buy)
Hasan Sas 704 (fast, agile, clever)
Okocha 676 (a dribble king, but prone to errors)
Hleb 737 (dependable all rounder, ever improving)

WF/SMF
Matunel 466* (great acceleration, but small)
Van Persie 547 (all rounder)

CF
Martins 588 (fast – 99 speed/98 acceleration)
Djibril Cisse 676*
Odonkor 579* (quick, tricky, only 20)
Rommedahl 635 (fast, skilled)
Reyes 709 (slightly low initial stats, but grows)
Portune 578 (strong, pacy)
B Mendy 483
Virota 704 (great free kicks, old)
(lightning fast, strong and ever improving – must buy)
Parfan* 391 (tricky, quick, young – bargain)
Mendoza 527* (great front man, all rounder, ever improving)
Drogba 704 (great solo striker, strong, tall)

STEP TWO: SEASON TWO/ THREE

TITLE CHALLENGERS

At the end of the first season you need to buy carefully. A solid DMF (like Heitinga) is vital, plus GK (Itandje) and another fast striker (Farfan/Matunel/Odonkor). The spine of the team should be manned with players with 80+ stats to finally claim the D2 title and compete in D1. Your weaker default players are best played on the wings.

REPLAY! Lovely logo, eh?

SEASON 2 FAQ

How do I use the close season to my advantage?
To maximise cash for transfers, play every friendly game (up to eight) – you can then sign players between matches. This tip is worth bearing in mind: play crap teams to guarantee wins and claim 1000+ *PES* points per match. This is vital if your cash balance is lower than your wage demands (see the figures on the top right of the main *Master League* menu). Don't forget to train during close season – it's the only way for older players to regain their stats. It's easy to ignore individual skills training, so tap L1 on the Training menu for some more options.

What's the best formation?
You should have about six decent players, so go 3-4-3, with two fast WF's, a creative OMF, fit and strong DMF, plus one *tall* CBT. It's easier to defend than score – so take the risk (see *GM*'s Formation). You should have enough to win promotion to D1 and win the D2 cup.

When you've got decent players, try setting individual attacking patterns in Formations.

By Season Three, you should have good players on the bench who can change a game.

STEP THREE: SEASON FOUR

CHAMPIONS

By now, you should be in D1 with a squad of eight to ten good (i.e. 80+ stats) players, plus a decent cash reservoir of 20,000 *PES* points plus. This is the time for fine-tuning and superstar acquisition. Take your pick from the list below, and follow our Transfer Tips to maximise return.

Success in the cup tournaments is relatively easy, but to win the league you can't afford to lose more than three matches all season.

TRANSFER TARGETS (SEASON 4)

GK
Buffon 1044 (best value, great GK skills)
Rahn 1180 (superb, but ageing)

CBT
Campbell 870 (very strong, good in air)
P Cannavaro 1064 (good jumper, good ball player)
Chivu 902
Samuel 1111 (98 Def stat, solid)
Maldini (wait until he retires and is 'reborn' in Season 4 for a bargain)

SB
Ashley Cole 806* (left footer, fast, good SMF cover)
Riise 772* (great shot, solid)
Puyol 975
Javier Zanetti 999 (skilled, good link up attacker)
I Cordoba 805 (rock solid)

DMF
Gerrard* 1044 (Great passer, fit, good shot, busy)
Ballack 1111 (strong, good dribbler, shooter, but slow)
Veira 1128 (strong, tall, good tackler)
Stankovic 907 (talented, mid 20s)
Rosicky 1248* (doubles as superb OMF)

OMF
Van Der Vaart 999* (great all rounder, ever improving, but small)
Kaka 1064 (silky dribbler, tricky, good passer)
Aimar 1145 (small, but superb dribbler)
Ronaldinho* 1315 (weak in tackle, but ultimate dribbler/ playmaker)
Recoba 1290 (small but insanely skilled)

SMF/WF
Robben 806 (strong, quite fast, improving)
Ewerthon 806* (super fast, ever improving, bit weak)
Duff 1111 (small, agile, good shooter)
Henry 1384* (immense all rounder, except headers and power shots)
Jorgensen 806 (solid mid 30s)

CF
Shevchenko 1248 (strong, fast, good shooter)
Ibrahimovch 806 (good feet, tall, good in air – good target man)
Adriano 870 (fast, 99 power, rough but tough)
Owen 1315 (great finisher, super dribbler, but small/bit fragile)
Ronaldo 1387 (super strong, fast and deadly, but lacks aerial presence)

DEVELOPING PLAYERS

In *PES 4*'s *Master League*, certain players improve as they play (see the Development Sheet in the *ML* menu):

1) Early Bloomer – players who peak early, and dip in their late 20s, such as C.Ronaldo
2) Late Developers – players who gradually improve into their 20s, including Pires
3) Superstars – whose key stats never deteriorate, like Zidane

It's important to bear this in mind when signing players. On the other hand, stars like Rooney (18 at the start of the game) matures steadily into his early 20s. Players improve according to how you use them, e.g. scoring improves shooting accuracy. Always opt for a good young player over a good old player if their stats/wages are roughly equivalent. Key tip: after three or four seasons, the game 'releases' new superstar players to replace those who have retired. Aside from hugely talented unknown teens (like Craioveanu with 97 Speed, but 10 Defence – so you need to nurture him), you find 'reborn' superstars like Paulo the near-complete package, but at bargain prices.

RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT PLAYERS

Pique (CBT)
Walton (SB)
Drost (SB)
Darren Potter (CM)
Craioveanu (SMF)
Fabrigas (CM)
Rooney (CF/OMF)

TOP TIP 3
Use the Formation Settings menu to set players' attacking bias. In the 3-4-3 system, set the defenders to High defensive arrows (pointing towards keeper), and the wide strikers with arrows pointing parallel and diagonal toward the nearest touchline.

CLOSE SEASON DEVELOPMENT

Make sure you play all the friendly matches and use each week to train your players. It's time consuming but will pay dividends in the long run.

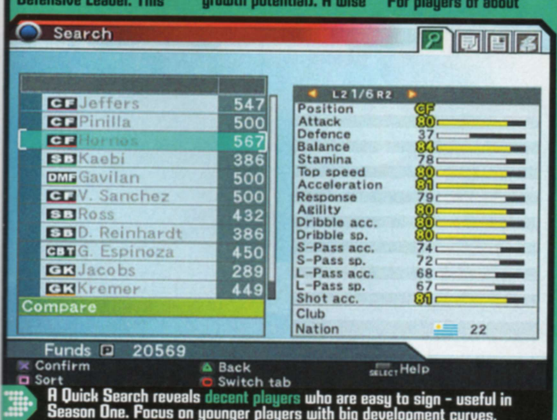
TRANSFER TIPS

What are the basic options?
If you're strapped for cash (between 2000-5000 *PES* points), use the Quick Search option. The game finds 10-15 cheap players who are easy to sign – and sometimes unearths gems like Pique (a tall CBT with huge growth potential). If you're stupidly rich (40,000+), use the Talent Search option to plug obvious gaps in your team e.g. Dogfighter, Speedster, Defensive Leader. This option helps to retrieve the players who may not immediately have the best stats, but have vital Special Ability stars, giving them, say, increased Defensive Line control, or Man Marking ability. Sometimes, a defender with leadership abilities (like Maldini, Samuel or Perdinand) can revolutionise a talented – but otherwise underperforming – back four. Beware, these players won't sign easily and won't come cheap. The best option is the Advanced Search, vital to pinpoint key positions and narrow the options. For example, finding a CF who is 180cm+ tall, with 80+ Speed, 80+ Attack and between 15-21 years old. Don't forget, when you've got a shortlist, you can sort it by any attribute by tapping ⓐ (useful to find, say, the youngest players with growth potential). A wise idea is to Add to List (tap ⓧ and follow menu) all the players you're interested in, then compare them head to head in the List option.

How much do I pay?
You pay two sums – the one off transfer fee, and the player's wage which is due in the last week of the close season. It's safe to overspend in the middle of the season, provided you can win enough games/trophies to compensate by the end of the close season. A 12 to 18,000 *PES* Point deficit is easily recovered (you can scoop 8000+ in close season friendly games alone). A good/ bargain player like Mendoza 527 should cost 5000-ish transfer fee points plus a wage slightly above the figure quoted by his name.

How do I get my man?
For players of about 5000 transfer fee points, offer about 300-999 *PES* points over the odds. For players with 10,000+ transfer fees, you may need to pay as much as 5000 points over the odds – that's why you should bargain shop for the first two seasons. Wage-wise, it's wise to offer about 10-15% more than the player's estimated wage to secure their services. For example, offer Mendoza (527) about 600. It's a small price to pay at the end of the season. A key tip is to propose Trade transfers using your fringe players, cutting about 3000-5000 points off the Transfer fee. Another cut-price tactic is proposing loan deals until the end of a season (during the mid-season transfer window), so you avoid transfer fees. The key here is offering astronomical wages (say double), but you get the frustration of losing the player after an agreed time. Always offer players five-year contracts to increase the attractiveness of your offer.

Are there any sneaky tips?
During the mid-season transfer window, do an Advanced Search for all players with 0-1 contract years remaining – their club will be more eager to sell at a decent price for fear of losing them at the end of the season. When it comes to re-negotiating with your own players, offer them a trifling amount more (like 20 wage points) – they always re-sign.



A Quick Search reveals decent players who are easy to sign – useful in Season One. Focus on younger players with big development curves.

OVER £2000 OF PRIZES TO WIN!

WIN! LEGEND OF KAY

What evil animals have invaded Kay's homeland in the game?

A) GORILLAS
B) ALSATIANS
C) BUSH-BABIES

5 COPIES TO BE WON

TEXT GM QUIZ1 FOLLOWED BY YOUR ANSWER TO 83130.

WIN! MECHASSAULT 2: LONE WOLF

What does VTOL stand for?

A) VERY TOUGH ONBOARD LASERS
B) VERTICAL TAKE-OFF AND LANDING
C) VAPORISE TEAMS OF LIONS

5 COPIES TO BE WON

TEXT GM QUIZ2 FOLLOWED BY YOUR ANSWER TO 83130.

IN POD WE TRUST!

Win everything you need to enjoy *TimeSplitters Future Perfect* including a black iPod so you can listening to your own music while you're splitting time!

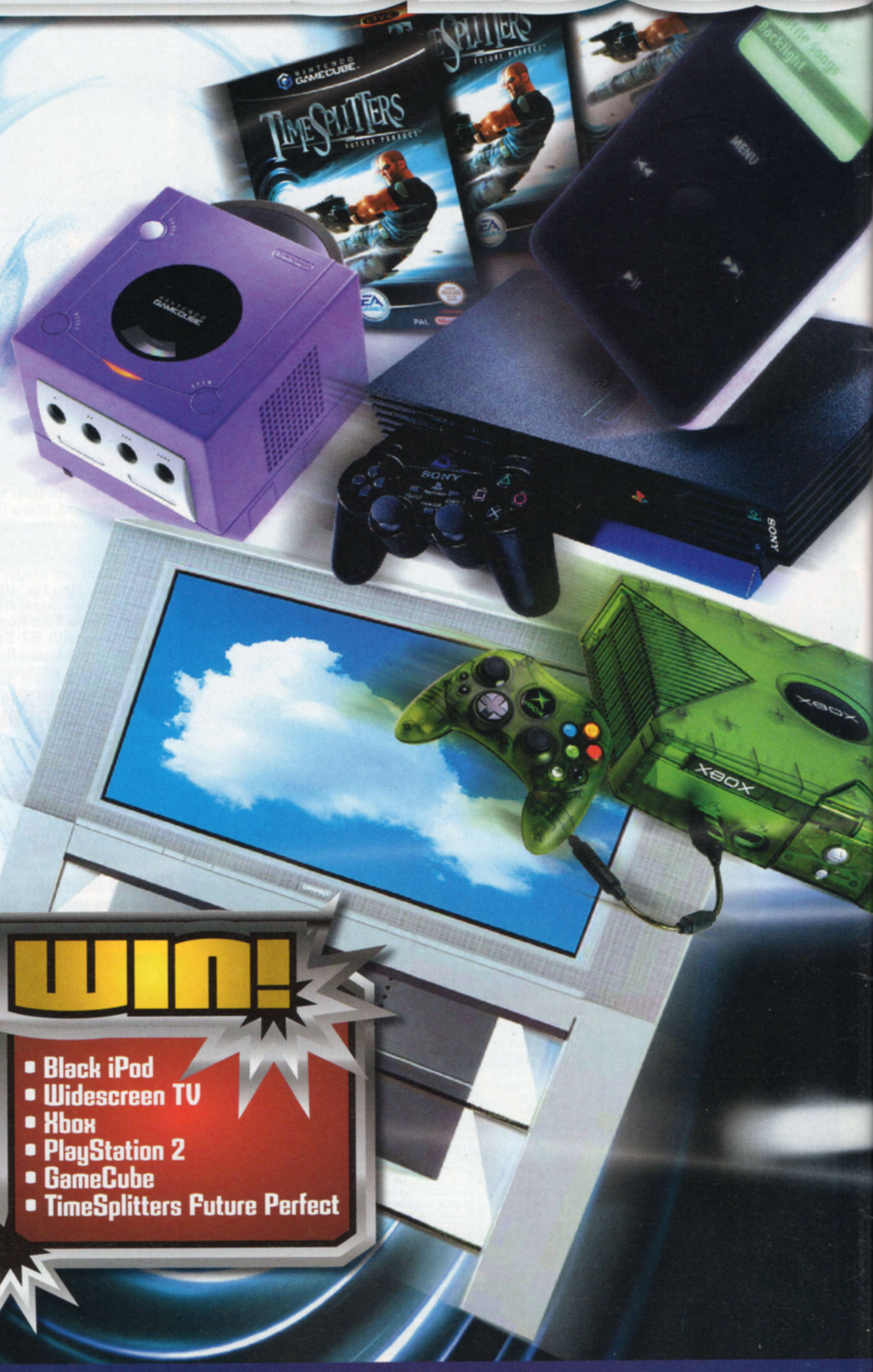
Celebrate the release of Free Radical and Electronic Arts' explosive new shoot-'em-up *TimeSplitters* in the best possible way, with this incredible selection of hi-tech machinery. For starters you'll win a copy of the *TimeSplitters Future Perfect* for the Xbox, an Xbox to play it on, a PlayStation2 and a GameCube to complete your gaming options, and a gorgeous widescreen telly to grace your living room – perfect for splitscreen '*Splitters* action.

And if that wasn't enough, you'll also win a manly, black iPod enabling you to store all your music on one slender sexy pocket sized piece of kit! It's like something from future, only available right now!

Also, there are copies of the game for four runners-up! To win all these incredible prizes all you have to do is send us the correct answer to the fairly easy question that you'll find below and send in your entry before the 28th March.

Which company is responsible for the iPod?
a) Orange
b)) Apple
c) Kiwi Fruit

TIME IS SO



WIN!

- Black iPod
- Widescreen TV
- Xbox
- PlayStation 2
- GameCube
- TimeSplitters Future Perfect

THREE WAYS TO ENTER:

1. WRITE TO US
Scribble your answers on the form, cut it out, stuff it into an envelope and send it to In Pod We Trust, GamesMaster, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

2. E-MAIL US
E-mail your answers, with your name, address, age and telephone number, to gamesmastercompo@futurenet.co.uk

3. TEXT US
You can enter the compo by text. Just text GM QUIZ1 then A, B or C to 85070*.

*Text messages cost 50p inc VAT (for main compo) and 25p inc VAT (for other compos) plus your normal text cost. Service provider: Opera Telecom, B1 2JB.

WIN! MARIO POWER TENNIS

Which sport has Mario yet to take part in?

A) GOLF
B) CART RACING
C) SNOOKER

5 COPIES TO BE WON. TEXT GM QUIZ3 FOLLOWED BY YOUR ANSWER TO 83130.

WIN! ASTRO BOY

Who is the creator of *Astro Boy*

A) OASMU TEZUKA
B) SHIGERU MIYAMOTO
C) AKIRA KUROSAWA

5 COPIES TO BE WON. TEXT GM QUIZ4 FOLLOWED BY YOUR ANSWER TO 83130.

WIN! GTR

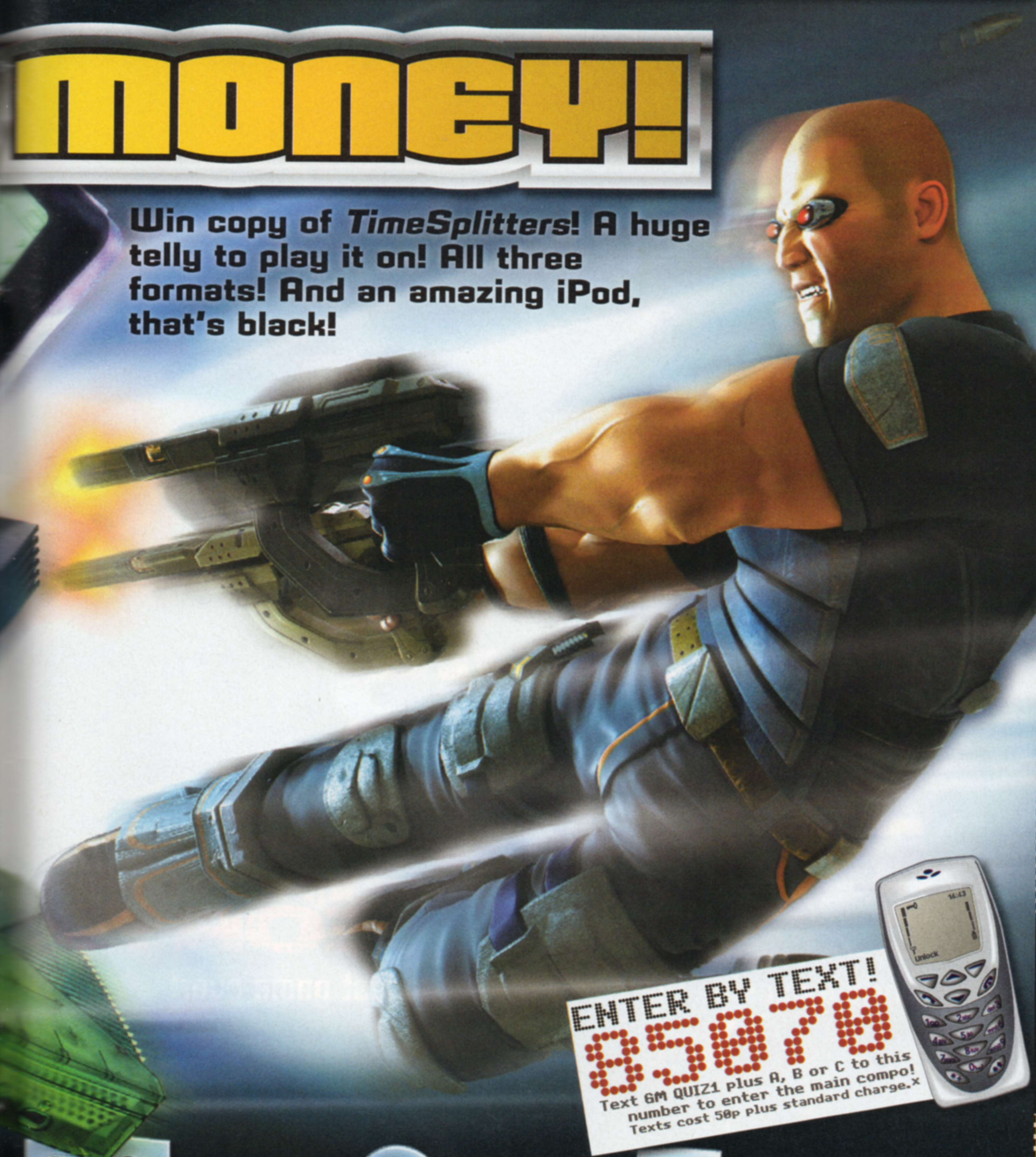
One of the PIA cars you get to drive in *GTR* is the..?

A) SKODA FABIA
B) FORD KA
C) LAMBORGHINI DIABLO GTR

5 COPIES TO BE WON. TEXT GM QUIZ5 FOLLOWED BY YOUR ANSWER TO 83130.

MONEY!

Win copy of *TimeSplitters*! A huge telly to play it on! All three formats! And an amazing iPod, that's black!



ENTER BY TEXT! B3078

Text GM QUIZ1 plus A, B or C to this number to enter the main compo! Texts cost 50p plus standard charge.x

Cut it out and send it in!

ENTER HERE!

Tick the boxes next to the correct answers, write down your details and send us the coupon by 28th March 2005. Or if you don't want to mess up your precious magazine, simply write down your answers on a bit of paper or postcard. Or even a stuck-down envelope. We're really not fussy! ... Fill it in!

Name _____

Age _____

Address _____

_____

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E-mail address _____

Telephone _____

LEGEND OF KAY
What evil animals have invaded Kay's homeland in the game?
a) Gorillas
b) Alsatians
c) Bush-babies

MECHASSAULT 2: LONE WOLF
What does VTOL stand for?
a) Very Tough Onboard Lasers
b) Vertical Take-Off and Landing
c) Vaporise Teams Of Lions

MARIO POWER TENNIS
Which sport has Mario yet to take part in?
a) Golf
b) Cart racing
c) Snooker

ASTRO BOY
Who is the creator of *Astro Boy*
a) Oasmu Tezuka
b) Shigeru Miyamoto
c) Akira Kurosawa

GTR
One of the PIA cars you get to drive in *GTR* is the..?
a) Skoda Fabia
b) Pord Ka
c) Lamborghini Diablo GTR

Send To:

In Pod We Trust compo
GamesMaster, Future Publishing,
30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

Compo Rules: Employees of Future Publishing and their families are not permitted to enter this competition. Bog off, Mum! And you, Dad. There is no cash alternative to the prizes. Prizes may differ from those shown. The judge's decision is final, and absolutely no correspondence will be entered into. The closing date for entries is 28th March 2005.

GM 154 WINNERS

HAPPY NEW GEAR COMPETITION
Shui Han Anne Cheong, Kent

METROID PRIME 2
Hugh Whitworth, London, Paul Murphy, Croydon, Andrew Trussell, Shefford, Sam Sheridan, Solihull, Joshua Julien, Essex

PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN
Hassan Khan, Bury, James Cooper, Coventry, Dave Humphreys, Shrewsbury

PLATOUT
Joshua Saunby-Gray, Grimsby, Adam Jones, Nuneaton, Luke Wilkinson, York, Daniel Simpson, Hendal, Iain Spence, London

FOOTBALL MANAGER 2005
Craig Dickson, Edinburgh, Connor Alexander, Cleveland, Stephen Birkett, Burton-on-Trent, Jonathan Smails, Gateshead, S Huntley, Alston

SPYRO FUSION
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HUNGRY EYES · eyeopener	114945	124945
NOTHING I WON'T DO · special d	114411	124411

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THE WEEKEND · michael gray	114868	124868
I LOVE THEM HOES · eamon	114088	124088
UNWRITTEN · natasha bedingfield	114771	124771
I BELIEVE IN YOU · kylie minogue	114900	124900
CURTAIN FALLS · blue	114930	124930
RIDE IT · geri halliwell	114897	124897
SUNDAY MORNING · maroon 5	114866	124866
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WELCOME TO MY TRUTH · anastacia	114721	124721
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SUMMER RAIN · slinkee minx	114487	124487
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OUT OF THE BLUE · delta goodrem	114850	124850
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ACE OF SPADES · motorhead	115109	125109
VERTIGO · u2	115004	125004
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BLACK BETTY · spiderbait	113761	123761
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BAT OUT OF HELL · meat loaf	111286	121286
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ALWAYS · blink 182	114629	124629
NUMB/ENCORE · jay z and linkin park	115086	125086
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TV	MONO	POLY
SCOOBY DOO	111142	121142
BANANA SPLITS	112578	122578
RHUBARB AND CUSTARD	111623	121623
WINNIE THE POOH · theme	111613	121613
ITCHY & SCRATCHY SHOW	111301	121301
CAPTAIN PUGWASH · theme	112113	122113
HONG KONG PHOOEY · title music	113642	123642
PINKY AND THE BRAIN · theme	111607	121607
POPEYE · popeye	111129	121129
LOONEY TUNES · looney tunes	111151	121151
INDIE	**MONO**	**POLY**
MARY · scissor sisters	114541	124541
SPITTING GAMES · snow patrol	114350	124350
LOVE OF RICHARD NIXON · m s preachers	114884	124884
DON'T EVER THINK (TOO MUCH) · zutons	114887	124887
HOW TO BE DEAD · snow patrol	114935	124935
HIP HOP	**MONO**	**POLY**
BREATHE STRETCH SHAKE · mase	114939	124939
YOUR MOTHER'S GOT A P***S · g l chain	114925	124925
DROP IT LIKE ITS HOT · snoop dogg	114879	124879
THE NEW WORKOUT PLAN · k west	114724	124724
MY PLACE · nelly	114500	124500
I KNOW WHAT GIRLS LIKE · jay z	114985	124985
MILLIONAIRE · kelis	114458	124458
BALLA BABY · chingy	114978	124978
STOP BEING GREEDY · dmx	114980	124980
OYE MI CANTO · n.o.r.e	114997	124997
GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE · g l chain	114564	124564
HEY YA · outkast	113176	123176
DANCE	**MONO**	**POLY**
CALL ON ME · eric prydz	114436	124436
OUT OF TOUCH · uniting nations	115090	125090
TAKE ME AWAY · stonebridge feat therese	114940	124940
HOTRIDE · prodigy	114905	124905
MY MY MY · armand van helden	114619	124619
COME WITH ME · special d	113678	123678
I'M IN HEAVEN · n-trance	115111	125111
PUT EM HIGH · stonebridge	113747	123747
RIGHT HERE'S THE SPOT · basement jaxx	115078	125078
FLASHDANCE · deep dish	114673	124673

R & B	MONO	POLY
MY NECK MY BACK · khia	112416	122416
YEAH · usher feat ludacris & lil jon	113546	123546
BURN · usher	113800	123800
CONFESSIONS PART 2 · usher	114219	124219
F*** IT (I DON'T WANT YOU..) · eamon	113519	123519
BABY BOY · beyonce knowles ft s. paul	112933	122933
NOT TOO LATE FOR LOVE · beverly knight	115009	125009
CARELESS WHISPER · 2play ft t. jules	115083	125083
NEVER REALLY WAS · mario winans	114405	124405
UNTITLED · d'angelo	115012	125012
I DON'T WANT TO KNOW · mario winans	113805	123805
HAPPY PEOPLE · r kelly	114184	124184
FOOTBALL	**MONO**	**POLY**
MATCH OF THE DAY	111126	121126
SOCCER AM CATWALK · jean knight	112559	122559
YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE	111351	121351
12 CANTONA'S · man utd terraces	114826	124826
GEORDIES ARE THE PRIDE · n'castle terraces	113860	123860
GOOD OLD ARSENAL · arsenal terraces	114678	124678
PRIDE OF ALL EUROPE · man u terraces	114827	124827
THE GREAT ESCAPE · s wednesday	111354	121354
WOO HOO · the 5 6 7 8's	114166	124166
THEMES	**MONO**	**POLY**
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE	111121	121121
ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES	111369	121369
X FACTOR	114836	124836
DAD'S ARMY	114937	124937
THE SIMPSONS	111132	121132
ROCKY · jogging theme	112481	122481
DIRTY DANCING	111249	121249
AXEL F · beverley hills cop	111601	121601
EXORCIST	111871	121871
PHOENIX NIGHTS	112364	122364
GOOD BAD AND THE UGLY	111181	121181
MUPPETS	111134	121134
ALWAYS LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE	113865	123865
THE CROW · DEAD SOULS · 9 inch nails	114990	124990
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